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EVERY FRIDAY

# Autosport

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

## IN THIS ISSUE

**KENTISH BORDER TRIAL  
ROY FEDDEN TROPHY  
TRIAL**

Full Report and Pictures

**AN AMERICAN  
FORMULA 1 CAR ?**

John Bolster—Russell Lowry  
Philip Smith

Vol. I No. 15  
December 1, 1950





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# Autosport

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

Incorporating "THE MOTOR CLUB"

Managing Editor: GREGOR GRANT

Vol. I No. 15

December 1, 1950

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## NOTICES

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## EDITORIAL

THE announcement by the R.A.C. that the F.I.A. will shortly meet to consider the next Grand Prix formulae will be studied with great interest by all followers of motor racing. Many people anticipate that more encouragement may be given to unsupercharged cars in Formula 1, and it is not beyond the realms of possibility that the present up to 1,500 c.c. supercharged, and 4,500 c.c. unsupercharged ruling, which is due to terminate at the end of 1953, might be replaced by a compressor-less formula. If this comes about, then the B.R.M. cannot have more than three years of useful racing life, and it is apparent that development along unsupercharged lines may have to be commenced at a very early date. On the other hand, the unblown 4½-litre Ferrari was produced "out of the hat", and undoubtedly its designers fell back on data available through successful racing of Formula 2 and sports cars—both unsupercharged types.

The Abecassis-Heath team of Alta-engined H.W.M.s did remarkably well last season in Formula 2, and the Cooper, of course, was a dominating factor in Formula 3. It has been suggested in several quarters that a "Baby B.R.M." for Formula 2 work would be a profitable investment for the future. Obviously the B.R.M. set-up will be fully occupied with the Grand Prix Formula 1 cars; therefore a certain amount of co-operative work might be advantageous in the near future.

\* \* \*

THIS is the season of dinners and dances. The social side of club life comes into its own, and for many members the annual "do" is the most enjoyable event of the year. Usually the opportunity is taken to present prizes won at various events, and in this respect AUTOSPORT feels that some competitors do not altogether play the game.

It is most embarrassing for whosoever is presenting the prizes to have only a few people turn up to collect their pots. Name after name is often announced by the Club Secretary, only to be met with: "Not here!" Surely if it is worth competing in a Club's events, it is only common courtesy to attend the prize-giving ceremony. Admittedly it may often be difficult and inconvenient to go, but even so, a letter of apology to the Club concerned would be greatly appreciated. To give the event a miss without a word of apology is highly uncomplimentary to the Club and its officials.

No one likes to be labelled "pot-hunter", but many club members feel that certain competitors who win awards and make no apparent attempt to turn up at the annual dinner-dance can be so termed.

## OUR COVER PICTURE

RIDE HIM COWBOY! Jim Appleton's passenger, Dennis Dent, has that certain rodeo look as he bounces to assist Jim's Special on Beacon Hill during the recent "Cottingham".





**POWER PLUS:** Alec Francis's Mercury-powered H.R.G. rocketing up The Raises during last Saturday's "Roy Fedden."

## Nearly a Dead-heat in

**CYRIL BOLD WINS FROM JOHNNY CLEGG AND CUTH HARRISON—BREAKHEART LOSES ITS STING—WELL-SUPPORTED BRISTOL M.C. AND L.C.C. CLASSIC**

**T**HE Roy Fedden Trophy Trial, organized by the Bristol M.C. and L.C.C. on 25th November attracted an entry of sixty-two cars, including a strong contingent from the north. Despite thick fog, there were only nine non-starters. Only Cyril Bold (1,080 Bold), Johnny Clegg (1,172 Clegg) and Cuth Harrison (1,172 Harford) completed the two-loop circuit without loss of marks.

The final destination of the Roy Fedden Trophy devolved on the times in the cross-roads, forward and reverse test, Bold taking 23 secs., against 23½ secs. and 24½ secs., by Harrison and Clegg respectively. Thus Bold won by the narrow margin of one-fifth of a second. "Lucky" Lew Tracey retired with a broken piston.

Widden was the first section in the north loop: it consisted of a gentle, muddy gradient calling for "toe down" methods, and only six folk

failed to reach the top unaided. Alf's Delight, normally a stopper, was a piece of cake, even the dreaded sharp right-hand bend followed by the notorious bump failing to halt all but three unfortunates. These were C. M. Seward (920 Meakin-Cross), R. S. Roberts (1,172 Robros) and, surprisingly enough, Alec Francis in the Mercury-engined H.R.G.

### **Bartlett Stops on Fort**

Frost had made Fort simple, but Leslie Onslow-Bartlett was one of the three failures. The Bartlett-J.A.P. appears to have little in the way of directional stability, and the front wheels wave about in the atmosphere in a most alarming manner whenever "The Chest" turns on the wick on anything like a slope. Cyril Bold and Reg Phillips treated the section like a speed hill-climb.

The once feared mud- and rock-surfaced Breakheart has apparently lost its sting. With frequent use it has become much wider, and competitors can pick and choose their route. Onslow-Bartlett came to rest on the famous step, but easily restarted. J. Readings cannoned his Regent off the bank but continued non-stop. Jim Appleton's Javelin-powered Appleton was also amongst the seventeen failures. Outstandingly good climbs were put up by Godfrey Imhof (1,172 Imhof) and Cuth Harrison (1,172 Harford).

Hodgecombe can usually be depended on to sully many clean sheets with its former leaf-mould surface and long gradient. However, a well-meaning farmer "improved" it by laying down gravel in many parts. Seven people stopped, including Ken Burgess (1,480 Burgess) and Imhof.



"Goff" was particularly unlucky, as his speedometer cable came adrift and shorted his ignition switch. B. Fitzwater (1,087 Riley Special) halted with grinding noises from the region of his back axle.

### South Loop More Difficult

The south loop was more difficult. A new hill, Shrub, sorted out the entry in no uncertain manner, and became muddier and more difficult with each succeeding competitor. Only nine drivers obtained full marks here. The Bartlett Special aviated more than considerably and rammed a tree. Its conductor twirled the steering wheel but front wheels require something more than air for steering purposes. A large bump near the top caused most of the entrants to come to a standstill.

Another brand-new section, The Raises, caused many failures. This is normally a timber-hauling track, extremely steep and very slippery. Alec Francis made an excellent climb, as did Cyril Bold. In all, fifteen competitors gained full marks, against the thirty-eight who didn't.



*SIDE SLIP: J. Readings's Regent ploughing its way through the mud of Green Lanes. This car is powered by a modified Lancia Lambda engine.*

## the "Roy Fedden"



*RUTTED: C. Brough's Dellow finds an outsize in ruts on Green Lanes—he continued non-stop.*

The deep gully in the steep, winding section named Green Lanes caused plenty of trouble, and this hill was voted as being the most interesting of the day. Wally Waring (1,196 Dellow) and Horace Roberts (3,917 Allard) made really superb climbs, but Ron Faulkner (4,000 Mercury) indulged in bush-clipping and attempted tree-felling before coming to rest. Ashleigh Cleave (1,086 Morris) made (for him) a very wild assault, and Reg Phillips, after sticking in the mud at the top, restarted unassisted. Alec Francis tried very hard to nurse his badly misfiring motor up, whilst D. Bollom almost overturned his Dellow when reversing downhill. Bill Sleeman (1,172 Sleeman) and Norman Terry (1,172 Dellow) both retired with unhealthy rear axles. Actually fourteen people did climb clean, which was a remarkably high proportion considering the difficult nature of this particular section. Johnny Clegg (1,172 Clegg) made what was almost the perfect climb.

### Faulkner Ditches the Mercury

Upper Doynton was quite easy and, in fact, the first of its four subsections was used for the acceleration test. The Bartlett Bullet was fastest here. Ron Faulkner badly ditched the big Mercury in the top section.

*(continued overleaf)*





*AIRBORNE: This Green Lanes shot of Leslie Onslow-Bartlett's Bartlett-J.A.P. proves fairly conclusively that controllability has been sacrificed to an excessive rear-to-front weight distribution ratio.*

### The "Roy Fedden"—continued

Only six failures were reported, but the last few competitors climbed the hill in the almost total oblivion of pea-soup fog.

### Quick Results

With usual ship-shape and Bristol fashion, Messrs. Salter, Atkinson, Storey, Jones, Kay and Ashby produced the results in something under an hour after the last man clocked in. Much to his surprise, after spending most of his time trying four-point landings, Leslie Onslow-Bartlett learned that he had won the Daphne Trophy for the best "under 1,100 c.c."

The "Northern Lights" team (not entered by Russell Lowry!) comprising Harrison, Clegg and Phillips took the team prize.

Immediately the trial was over, several of the entrants disappeared in the fog towards London to take part in the next day's Kentish Border Sporting Trial—also a "star-red" event.



*STANDARD-LOOKING: Ashleigh Cleave's Morris in the deep mud of Green Lanes. His offside front wing looks a trifle crumpled!*



## PROVISIONAL RESULTS

**The Roy Fedden Trophy**—(Best Performance)—Cyril Bold (1,080 Bold), 0 marks lost.

**The Alexander Duckham Cup** (Runner-up)—Cuthbert Harrison (1,172 Harford), 0.

**The Daphne Trophy** (Best under 1,100 c.c.)—Leslie Onslow-Bartlett (996 Bartlett-J.A.P.), 35.

**The J. H. King Cup** (Best over 1,100 c.c. and up to 2,500 c.c.)—F. B. Radford (1,172 Rad-Ford), 15.

**Basil Barber Memorial Trophy** (Over 2,500 c.c. and over 1,100 c.c. S)—Johnny Clegg (1,172 Clegg), 0.

**Club Cup** (Best performance by member of promoting club not eligible for above trophies)—Godfrey Imhof (1,172 Imhof), 5.

**James Russell Shield** (Team Award)—Northern Lights (Clegg, Harrison and Reg Phillips).

**First Class Awards**—Walter Waring (1,196 Dellow), 15; Dave Price (1,172 Price), 20; Alec Francis (3,197 H.R.G.-Mercury), 20; C. E. Crump (1,172 Marden), 25; G. D. C. Ostroumoff (1,172 Dellow), 25; Gilbert Best (939 M.G.), 25.

**Second Class**—V. S. A. Biggs (1,172 Ford), 25; D. Bollom (1,172 Dellow), 30; Ken Burgess (1,486 Burgess), 35; L. J. Oliver (1,172 Oliver), 40; Reg Phillips (1,486 Fairley), 40; Ken Rawlings (2,008 Vanguard), 40; Alf Morrish (939 M.G.), 40.



*JAVELIN-BASED: Reg Phillips tests for oil level at the Cross Hands Hotel, Old Sodbury at the start of the "Fedden" whilst Mrs. Phillips studies the route card. The very far back mounting of the Javelin engine in the Fairley is a feature.*

## Another Premier for Imhof

**BEST PERFORMANCE IN KENTISH BORDER TRIAL—THE HORROR STOPS  
ENTIRE ENTRY—MANY COMPETITORS FOG-BOUND**

**G**ODFREY IMHOF followed up his "Cottingham" win the previous week-end with a victory in the Kentish Border C.C.'s Sporting Trial on 26th November in the Maidstone and Wye area. In spite of a dense fog, only six entrants failed to report to the start at the Spring Tavern, Wrotham Heath.

The event was well-organized but rather too long. It seemed a pity to take competitors an extra thirty or so miles to tackle two hills which turned out to be dead easy, and to have the finish nearly twenty-five miles away from the start. The unfortunate people who had come some distance and had brought their trials bolides on trailers, had to plug back to Spring Tavern to pick up their towing devices—Did we hear Michael Lawson say: "Serve 'em right; shouldn't use trailers in this man's sport"?

In all, forty-eight competitors were sent off into the fog. E. W. Vero

(1,172 Dellow) was quickest in the South Street special test with 13.6 secs., followed by Gerry Pentony (1,442 Cyclops), 14.0 secs., and Dave Price (1,172 Price) and Wally Waring (1,172 Dellow) each with 14.2 secs. Imhof made a brilliant climb of Boarley, which claimed fifteen victims. Ben Brown (1,172 Dellow) was also exceptionally good here: the former big-car exponent is rapidly accustoming himself to the art of Dellowing. Elizabeth Store (1,172 Ford) stopped very near to "Observed Section Ends" and Ken Burgess (1,486 Burgess) also halted near the top. After a few failures, Vic Biggs (1,172 Ford) headed a nap-hand of successes, taking the hill very fast and immaculately. Michael Lawson (1,172 Lotus) was also neat and effortless.

Pollyfields caused ten folk to blot their sheets. The bearded Bradshaw (Ausford) managed to invert his blue car in the ruts, but the only casualty

was an unlucky marshal who forgot that exhaust pipes do retain heat even after a car stops. Imhof, Lawson and Brown were very good here, and Tony Rumfitt rocketed up in his white Allard at a fair velocity with a delighted grin as he reached the top. Lang's little Austin scuttled up with power to spare. Wally Waring took it gently, but confidently, with just enough revs for the job in hand.

### The Horror

That chalky acclivity called The Horror fully lived up to its name. Aided by the remarkable synchronized bouncing of Jock Ross's (how his head stays on his neck no one knows!) Imhof all but forced the Imhof Special to the summit. It was noticeable that the little white car was leaving four separate tracks. Conclusions with a tree-trunk on an earlier section named Buckwell Bank

*(continued overleaf)*





**TALK OF THE TRIALS WORLD:** Jock Ross doing his remarkable "break-neck" bouncing in the Imhof Special, as "Goff" directs it up "The Horror". Imhof won the premier award.



**EXPLAIN THIS BOLSTER!** Eccentric behaviour of the "split-axle" front end of Ron Faulkner's Mercury on Pollyfields.

#### Kentish Border Trial—continued

had badly bent the near-side rear radius arm. The interesting point was that the drive was completely unaffected owing to the use of swing-axles.

Vic Biggs made a tremendous effort to reach the Imhof mark, and failed by about a sixteenth of an inch. C. E. Crump (1,172 Marden) looked as if he were going to clear the final section, but he too came to rest in number five. Other excellent attempts were made by E. G. Spence (Spence) and Wally Waring, who both halted a few feet below the fifth section. Ben Brown tore off with plenty of steam, hit a bump, and spun to a standstill in section two. Thus The Horror remained unconquered to the last.



Imhof was fastest in the Special Test with a finely-judged 17.4 secs. Other good times were recorded by Ron Faulkner (4,000 Mercury), 18.1 secs., Vic Biggs and Dennis Cotton (1,772 Cotton) each with 18.3 secs., and Wally Waring (18.4 secs.)

Limeworks did not claim a solitary victim, and Postman's Walk is probably climbed by G.P.O. vans, as only seven folk stopped, whereas this small section was anticipated as being a real marks-loser. The same also applied to Shrub's Wood, which pre-war competitors must recall with a shudder. The notorious dip and left-hand hairpin have lost all their former ability to halt an entire entry, and car after car swung round and motored up with little apparent effort. There were, of course, the odd failures including G. R. Brown (1,172 F.G.P.) and B. J. Birch (3,622 H.K.R.).

This wasn't Waring's lucky weekend. After having had his Jaguar rifled outside his home, and many papers, including his Monte Carlo Rally documents, pinched, Wally dropped one of the lens of his glasses in the mud. Marshals searched around but the disc had completely vanished.

As in the "Fedden", the last few competitors climbed in a thick fog. The finish was at the Swan Hotel, several miles south of Maidstone and



**FUNCTIONAL:** Dennis Cotton, one of the south's top-line mudpluggers, urges his businesslike 1,172 Cotton up Pollyfields in the Kentish Border trial.



officials had almost to resort to the use of slide-rules in working out the results which were announced as under:—

#### PROVISIONAL RESULTS

**Visitor's Cup**—Godfrey Imhof (1,172 Imhof), 98 marks.

**Committee Cup**—Michael Lawson (1,172 Lotus), 92.

**Harvey Cup**—A. E. Day (1,172 Dellow), 92.

**Alexander Bronze**—Walter Waring (1,196 Dellow), 98.

**Alexander Trophy**—R. E. Lang (747 Austin) 94.

**Team Award**—Candidi Provocatores (Imhof, Ken Burgess (1,486 Burgess) and Jim Appleton (1,486 Appleton).

**First Class Awards**—V. S. A. Biggs (1,172 Ford), 98; C. E. Crump (1,172 Marden), 98; Dave Price (1,172 Price), 94; E. G. Spence (1,172 Spence).

**Second Class**—Ben Brown (1,172 Dellow), 92; E. W. Vero (1,172 Dellow), 92; O. H. Sleep (1,172 Dellow), 92; Dennis Cotton (1,172 Cotton), 92; F. L. Stark (1,172 Dellow), 92.

**TOUCH AND GO:** E. Hollingsworth's Dellow at the dip on Pollyfields where Bradshaw's Ausford inverted itself.



# The Vintage Bisley Rally

## FOGGY—BUT FUN

FOG was the predominant feature of the Vintage Sports Car Club's Bisley Rally on Sunday last, 26th November, but the inextinguishable enthusiasm of the Vintagents made pleasant an event which, in all the circumstances, could have been utterly miserable. To rally to a bleak, foggy heath with visibility varying from a fair forty yards down to near nil, and there to congregate for a series of tests on inhospitable W.D. heathland—the prospect cannot have been enthralling. Yet such is the power of enthusiasm and interest that the 1950 Bisley Rally proved both successful and enjoyable.

All the ingredients of a motoring event were there—the parked cars, the hardy onlookers, the fantastically garbed drivers, the inevitable tea-wagon dispensing cheer which varied in price, it seemed, according to the amount tendered—and, permeating everything, not the fog, though that did its utmost, but *that* atmosphere which made the ardours of reaching, leave alone competing in, such an event seem trivial.

And what cars for the vintage lovers to feast their eyes on, what exquisitely restored examples of honoured marques, noble, erect and dignified. Sunbeams, Vauxhalls and Bentleys, of course, examples of Rolls-Royce, Invicta, Delage and Lancia; a splendid 1912 Alfonso Hispano Suiza, a surprisingly sedate-looking

Lorraine Dietrich, Hutton-Stott's wonderful 1903 Lanchester with neatly ducted transverse twin engine set amidships and emitting exciting chonking noises as it got under way, three finely restored Lagonda 12s, a 2 LTS Ballot, a Straker-Squire with the S.S. badge to confound the layman, a French Darracq with deliciously brassy radiator; a deplorable lapse in a rebodied Lancia; then, to atone for it, a Type 37 Bugatti, trim and "to order" in blue, and looking utterly captivating; and dear old *Floretta*, the famous 1908 G.P. Itala of Dr. Ewen.

The tests were four in number; a Slow-Fast, Stop-Restart, a "Le Mans" Run and Start at which some notable pedestrian get-aways were witnessed, and finally a Reversing and Parking test. Much dexterous handling of unhandy vehicles was to be seen, accompanied to a fair degree by gear crunching. *Floretta's* G.P. dignity seemed unruffled by such puerilities and her drain-pipe exhaust emitted triple-strength Bentley rumbling as Dr. Ewen hauled her around.

The Bug was almost vulgarly fast, and a graceless but energetic orange Austin Seven spurted around with much gusto.

Major Tulloch's Hudson Special revealed itself as the original urgeful Spikins car, and Dr. Harris had a beautiful '34 Frazer-Nash, not unheaded by H. J. Aldington, spectating.

Miss Lambert drove a black "1,100" H.R.G. most spiritedly as her second place in class C testifies; while an interloping Austin A90, glistening in black and chrome, took its class (non-vintage!) and, finishing early, stood modestly parked at a distance while its greybeard predecessors frolicked in the last test.

As the last cars finished, time-keepers and helpers "struck camp" and pylons, tapes, etc., disappeared with creditable speed.

A Le Mans Alfa, hovering discreetly in the foggy background, broke into stirring song; *Floretta* rumbled off to a *basso diminuendo*, so did a 30/98 and sundry Bentleys; the Lanchester "toofed" away on what seemed a surprisingly high second gear while two 1,100 c.c. Amilcars stammered in the cold. Thus the competitors made their hesitant way through the deepening gloom to the Bisley Pavilion, to seek warmth, light, tea and cheer—beer, too, for those disposed to linger until 7 p.m. But the majority, all too aware of the blanketing fog, left for the long, nerve-wracking trip homewards.

### PROVISIONAL RESULTS

**Class A, under 1,500 c.c. Vintage Cars**—1, W. P. H. Lockhart (1924 1,496 Alvis); 2, K. G. O. Dixon (1927 747 Austin); 3, D. H. Gahagen (1926 1,496 Bugatti).

**Class B, over 1,500 c.c. Vintage**—1, L. M. Austin (1929 2,446 Lancia); 2, Capt. Castle (1926 3,127 Rolls-Royce); 3, H. Birkett (1930 2,992 Bugatti).

**Class C, under 1,500 c.c. Non-Vintage**—1, R. L. Odell (1933 1,089 Riley); 2, Miss P. Lambert (1948 1,098 H.R.G.); 3, O. S. Gwatkin (1934 747 Austin).

**Class D, over 1,500 Non-Vintage**—1, H. C. Bradford (1950 2,660 Austin).

### BOLD A CERTAINTY FOR B.T.D.A. STAR

#### "Roy Fedden" Win puts Him On Top

IN winning the Roy Fedden Trophy, Cyril Bold has amassed 143 marks, a total which cannot be beaten by any other competitor for the B.T.D.A. Star, with only the "Glo'ster" on 2nd December remaining as a "starred" trial.

However, the struggle for runner-up is most interesting. This would appear to lie between Gordon Mosby (136), Wally Waring (129) and Cuthbert Harrison (116). If Harrison should head the field in the "Glo'ster"

and Mosby is lower than fifth, then "T. C." will be runner-up for the "Star". To ensure second place, "Dog-house" Mosby must be in the first five.

Should Waring win outright, and Mosby be lower than fifth and Harrison lower than sixth, then the southern driver will be runner-up. The way in which Cuth Harrison has reached the top bracket is all the more creditable in view of the fact that he has competed in only five "starred" events.

A full list of the final placings will be given in AUTOSPORT so soon as the "Glo'ster" result can be included.

### NOTWEN CORRECTION

ERNEST NEWTON AND CO., LTD., makers of Notwen Oils, wish to apologize for an error in their advertisement in AUTOSPORT, 17th November, wherein they claimed Best Performance in the Derbyshire Sporting Trial for Cyril Bold. This should have read the *Cockshoot* Trial, and sincere apologies are tendered to Cuth Harrison, the actual winner of the Derbyshire event.

\* \* \*

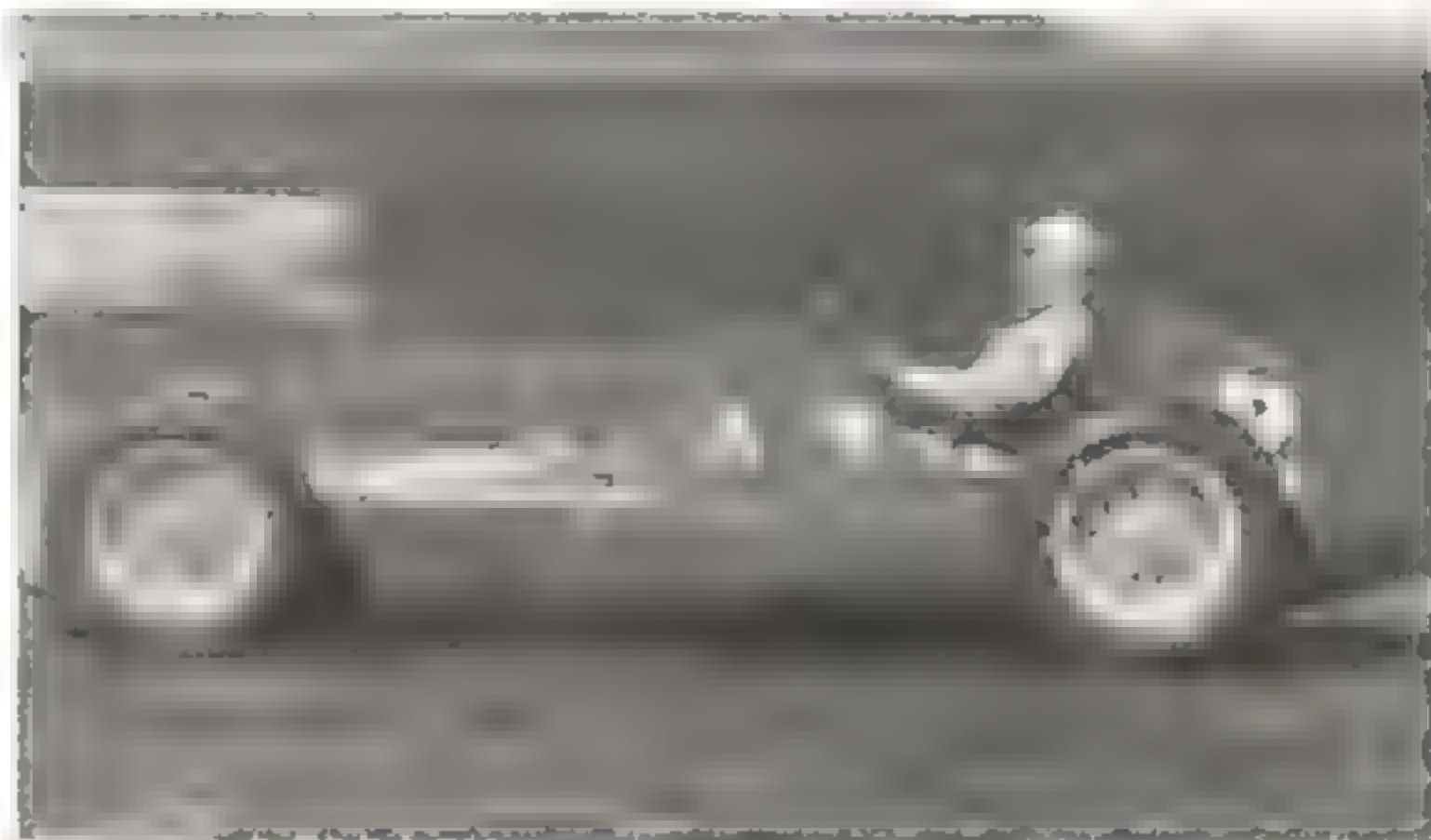
Owing to pressure on space—"Pit and Paddock" is held over this week.



# SITTING PRETTY

A CONTRAST IN RACING STYLES

(Right). With arms held almost straight, 1950 World Champion Giuseppe Farina lolls back comfortably in the seat of his Type 158 Alfa-Romeo. A number of Continental drivers appear to favour this driving position.



(Left). Bira in his "San Remo" Maserati sits bolt upright, and such is his "cool, calm and collected" appearance that it is often difficult to say whether or not he is photographed in a stationary or moving car.

(Right). Belgian driver Johnny Claes crouches over the wheel of his Lago-Talbot, tense and concentrating deeply. His practice lap in the B.R.D.C. Daily Express Trophy event last August was one of the highlights of the racing season.







*PERSONALITY PLUS—and glamour tool Mrs. Roy Eccles in an SSK Mercedes; a pre-war shot.*

## Technical and Otherwise - - - by John Bolster

# Cars with Personality

THERE is a film on show at the moment wherein the character of a recently deceased lady is seen through the eyes of the people who were closest to her. It is made apparent that to each of them she had an entirely different personality, and from their description, nobody would recognize the same girl. Now, I don't know much about young women, beer being my hobby, but I do know that motor cars are like that too.

Many motoring enthusiasts are absurdly partisan, and therefore can give no fair judgment on the merits of cars. Just because a machine has a particular badge on the front, it automatically becomes hallowed, however mediocre its performance. That is the only bad thing about one-make clubs, for by the time an otherwise quite reasonably sane man has spent a few evenings with his fellow clubmen, he can talk himself into an almost communistic state of intolerance.

I try to drive as many different types of motor cars as I possibly can, so that I shall have no bias towards any special sort. Furthermore, I always keep road test cars

for as long as I am allowed, to give the novelty a chance of wearing off. I do my best to cultivate this extreme impartiality because I realize that in any report the tester's personal impressions are worth much more than any tabulated performance figures. In other words, it isn't what a car does, it's how it does it that counts.

Nevertheless, however sane and logical one's outlook may be, there are a few cars which have something intangible about them, and which appeal to one for no apparent reason. This is a worrying admission for a conscientious tester to make, but, let's face it, these inanimate pieces of machinery can possess a definite personality. There are cars of brilliant performance that have not got this quality and they, though thrilling in the first hours of ownership, become a bore when the honeymoon is over. A car which has a very marked personality will appeal to some drivers as much as it will be hated by others, for the characteristics of man and motor should be complementary, but may be exactly the reverse.

For my own part, I dislike any car of which the controls

*The 1½-litre T.T. Riley of the mid-thirties was a car with a very definite personality.*





are heavy, insensitive, or lack precision, and I find it hard to enjoy the most sparkling performance if those faults are manifest. Some perfectly competent drivers, however, hardly seem to notice whether the pedals and levers work nicely or not, and perhaps that is why certain manufacturers apparently pay little attention to this matter. One would think that the actual points of contact between the motorist and his mount were of the greatest importance, but some modern gear levers and accelerator pedals are crude beyond belief.

In days of yore, one normally held the gear lever lightly between finger and thumb, and one was able to feel the gears into mesh. That type of change is rare nowadays, but it is difficult to dislike any car that has it. Most of the cheaper makes now have a Bowden cable to operate the throttle, and this can result in a jerky action that nags one, almost unconsciously, all the while one is driving. I applaud the hydraulic clutch control of the new Fords, and hope that we may soon have accelerators on the same principle.

The clutch has a good deal to do with the car's personality, though most modern examples are pretty good. Some of them are tiring to work in traffic, not only through being heavy in action, but because the angle through which the pedal operates has not been well

thought out. If your nearest and dearest takes an apparently unaccountable dislike to a particular car, that is very likely the reason, for some designers apparently only had the tough male boot in mind when considering the foot pedals.

A good driver seldom uses his brakes, but the knowledge that they will always pull him up four-square, whatever the emergency, is at the back of his mind the whole time. If he is in any doubt what will happen when he puts them on, he is unlikely to enjoy handling the vehicle in the fast, heavy traffic of to-day.

It is impossible to consider the steering and suspension separately, and of course this side of a car's behaviour has the greatest influence on its personality. On British roads, one soon becomes tired of a car that rolls on corners, however comfortable it may be in other respects. I think, really, that if the machine's demeanour is such that one can corner fast without one's passengers noticing it, that is half the battle. The curious thing is that so many enthusiasts allow their steering mechanism to get into a deplorable condition, through wear and mal-adjustment, without apparently noticing anything is wrong.

Nearly every motorist has a strong individual preference for some particular type of engine, and this is a pretty tricky subject upon which to generalize. The shape of the power curve alone does much to determine a car's character, and this is the reason for the undoubted charm of some vintage cars. It is a characteristic of a high-g geared car with large cylinders that it should give an impression of easy, effortless running, which has not yet been equalled by modern, multi-cylinder designs. I think this is partly due to the way the vintage machine holds its speed when one almost closes the throttle, whereas its successor behaves as if a brake had been applied. Whatever the reason, there are many people who find this a very endearing quality.

The sound an engine emits, or rather the type of sound, also has a considerable bearing on the subject. If one is mechanically fastidious, piston slap or the chatter of valve gear must be abhorrent, but there are those who prefer an engine that begins to get a bit rowdy as the revs mount. Certainly, the woolly type of motor that never has any real note to it can be peculiarly irritating with its subdued and meaningless murmuring. Equally, the shattering roar of a supercharged racing engine can inspire one to perform deeds of valour, though why I wouldn't know.

All these are mechanical things, but the appearance of a car can also have a big influence on its personality. There are vehicles that, on a long journey, one can almost grow to like, and then, in a shop window, the horrid truth is reflected, and one's ecstasy is blasted in a moment. Perhaps most important of all, the view that one sees from the driving seat can make or mar one's motoring pleasure. Almost all racing cars look superb from here, because they are entirely functional, and therefore beautiful. Through the screen of an American car, one beholds a vast sea of billowing tin, with nothing to show which way the device is pointing. For personality-plus, though, give me a driver's-eye view of what is known as "The Best Car in the World".



*E. R. A.s all developed distinct personalities of their own. Here are two of them at a pre-war Crystal Palace meeting.*



## RUSSELL LOWRY'S

## NORTHERN LIGHTS

PLAYING WITH FIRE—ALL THINGS COME. . . . —STOP-WATCH PINT—FOOD AGAIN—SLEEP—WHITE RILEY WINGS

A GARAGE owner friend of ours conceals a heart of gold behind a curtain of nautical invective, the legacy of many years spent catering for the needs of marine engines. Like most garage owners, he suffers from a small proportion of clients who cause a poundsworth of trouble for every half-crown that goes on the bill. This brings on some interesting conflicts between the kindly heart aforesaid and his Suez Canal Mark III temper. The other day, the conflict very nearly proved fatal. A particularly delicate operation was taking place on the garage bench. It wasn't going very well, and blood pressure was rising rapidly. The telephone bell rang. The tools were put down (blistering the bench as they touched it). A hairy hand grasped the 'phone and clapped it with a wild gesture to a throbbing ear.

"Ooh, goode moining," said a small voice, "I do hope you are well? I wonder if you would come and look at my tyres. Do you think they are all right, there is some sort of pink stuff showing through two of them."

End of story.

\* \* \*

THE fishermen of a certain northern village, on the other hand, are an independent race, and like to sort things out for themselves. One of them owns a van which completely refused to start the other morning. The refusal occurred within a few yards of the local garage, the owner of which, having nothing much to do at that particular moment, became an interested spectator of the successive windings and carburettor ticklings which grew in a crescendo of profanity. The expert offered no advice, feeling that he would probably be called in professionally in due course. He was. Despairing of the handle, the fishermen viewed a sloping causeway leading to the river bed. The tide was out. With the aid of a group of piscatorial brothers, the van was persuaded to the top of the slope, a gear was engaged, a firm seaboot was planted upon the throttle pedal, a shove, and she was off. Quickly the van gathered speed, the clutch was let in, and with a wild convulsion, the ancient motor sprang into life . . . and dived down the slope into eighteen inches of river mud.

With a quiet smile, the garage owner checked over the towing gear in his breakdown wagon. Truly, "All things come. . . ."

\* \* \*

AFTER these two anecdotes, one might be justified in feeling mildly thirsty, and the next subject, therefore, is Beer, the drinking of which is an innocuous pastime on present day specific gravity. (Memo. to Northern Editor—get Doc. Joe Edisbury to write a thesis on "Personal Lubrication—its Pleasures and Pitfalls".) The

Flying Pint Test at the Vintage Club's Southport Weekend produced a Best Time of the Day of 8 4 5th seconds, amidst cries of "Good old Yorkshire". The technique involved a speedy pick-up of the tankard, disregarding the handle, and application of the lips to the vessel while the latter was still travelling in an upward direction. At the same time, care had to be taken that the lungs were on the induction stroke. John Horridge's performance appeared to "Northern Lights" to be the acme of effortless absorption, but nearby critics took a poor view, affirming that the job could be done in half the time. An alleged record of 3 4 5th seconds was put forward. Any claimants?

\* \* \*

A GOOD deal of ink has been spilled on the subject of the Driving Tests at Torquay in the 1,000 Miles Rally. Some of it was poured out in undue haste, and has since been retracted. As with most things, there are two sides to the question, and it must not be forgotten that with a matter of 400 cars to be put through, if a mere ten seconds were added to the time taken over each competitor, a solid hour would be put on to the running time involved. Furthermore, it was clearly stated in the regulations that no questions would be answered, and competitors should have presented themselves fully prepared. A large number did so. On the other hand, after spending two days and two nights on the road, the average person does feel entitled to wipe his hands, settle himself in his seat, and get mentally prepared before crossing the last ditch, beyond which lies success or failure. Besides, the third test didn't look anything like the official hand-out, and the system of flag-dropping was certainly most peculiar.

\* \* \*

GUY WARBURTON scowled at me the other day. He said he had called for food at a pub recommended here, and found it unprintable. On investigating the matter, it was found that he had been to the wrong place. Heigh, ho.

To the Roll of Honour of places where one can feed on roads to and from the north, must be added the Black Boy at Northampton. A call was made here at 9 o'clock one very cold night, and an admirable meal enjoyed beside a roaring fire. I understand that the place is apt to be overcrowded in the middle of the day, but in the evening, conditions are much more comfortable.

\* \* \*

AMONG the fortunate people who are expecting to take delivery of a DB2 Aston Martin is Donald Ackernley, who has finally given up his endeavour to make a



hard-trying M.G. perform all the functions of half a dozen different motor cars. Donald throws himself with enormous enthusiasm into everything that he does, and should be a doughty performer with his new car. When he gets it,



*STILL LIFE—Colin Edge enjoying a spell of sweet oblivion in the back seat during the 1,000 Miles Rally.*

"I DIDN'T sleep a wink last night" says the song, and many competitors in long-distance events affirm the impossibility of getting any rest. The attached male-a-minute photograph shows that Colin Edge at least, is not among the sufferers from insomnia! Maybe saloon cars have their advantages, though the more rabid sportsmen among us will not admit it.

But Stan Asbury doesn't like bucket seats, and Geoff Holt is having the full width squab reinstalled in his TD Midget, so that the passenger can have a greater chance of getting his head down. I cannot think why, as co-driver Stan never sleeps anyhow. He doesn't even eat. I know. I have been with him on the Monte Carlo Rally.

IT appears that the North Midland boys have a standing argument with the Sheffield and Hallamshire Club, which was recently taken a step further in a sporting hill-climb near the Snake Pass, for a nominal prize known as "The Over-Revvers' Trophy", based on a bent conrod. Malcolm Bateman seems to have been the star of the day, and Alan Rogers made a welcome return from the racing fold, borrowing his old property the Rojah Special from Arnold Pownall for the occasion. Such was the sporting spirit of the day, that the North Midland captain lent his car to Sheffield and Hallamshire's Aldred, the latter being transportless.

THERE is a noticeable tendency these days for special tests to be held on tarmacadam or concrete surfaces. No doubt the motive is ease of organization and general tidiness of performance, but there has been an unexpected by-product in the shape of a crop of transmission troubles. The sudden gulp of stress has proved

too hard to swallow. Especially when the surface is dry. Apparently, a spot of wheelspin on nice soggy grass has its advantages after all!

THE White Riley keeps cropping up. It now seems that the front mudguards of this famous car are at present in the possession of Alan Hopkinson, and are about to be fitted to the Bancroft Special. This seems rather a pity, and as Denis Done intends to fit light alloy mudguards to the White car, one cannot help wondering if a swap could be arranged, whereby the Riley could get its own wings back. Front mudguards are apt to lead a short and merry life on Trials Specials.

ERIC LISTER reports that through AUTOSPORT he managed to borrow an instruction book for his Targa Florio O.M. He now asks that owners of O.M. cars in this country, drop him a line at 3 Rawlinson Road, Hesketh Park, Southport, with a view to forming an O.M. Register.

THE supply of back numbers of AUTOSPORT is shrinking rapidly, and only a handful of the earliest issues remain on the shelf. No. 10 looks like being the next candidate for Christie's, as only three copies exist in this office at the moment of writing.

### KIEFT TAKES CROP OF DISTANCE RECORDS Successful International Classes "I" and "J" Attempts at Monthéry.

DRIVING Mr. Cyril Kieft's latest Kieft-Norton, Stirling Moss, Ken Gregory and Jack Neill established several International Class records in Category "I" (up to 500 c.c.) and "J" (up to 350 c.c.), at Monthéry on 23rd November. For the 500 c.c. records, the Kieft was fitted with a single overhead camshaft Norton engine, and for the smaller class, a twin-o.h.c. 350 c.c. Norton power-unit was installed. In both cases, the engines were prepared and tuned by Steve Lancefield who accompanied the team, which was under the supervision of Cyril Kieft.

Conditions were anything but favourable: near gales blew over the circuit with intermittent rain, and very low temperatures. Despite this, the "350" averaged 79.62 m.p.h. for a 100 miles, and the larger-engined car, 91.4 m.p.h. for the same distance.

Early in October, a Panhard-powered D.B. established records from 50 kilometres to 200 kilometres, all of which have been shattered by the Kieft "500".

The new class records, subject to the usual confirmation by the F.I.A., are as follows:

International Class "J" (up to 350 c.c.).—Drivers, Stirling Moss and Ken Gregory.

50 Kilos, 78.44 m.p.h.; 50 Miles, 78.75; 100 Kilos, 79.08; 1 Hour, 79.37; 100 Miles, 79.62; 200 Kilos, 77.11.

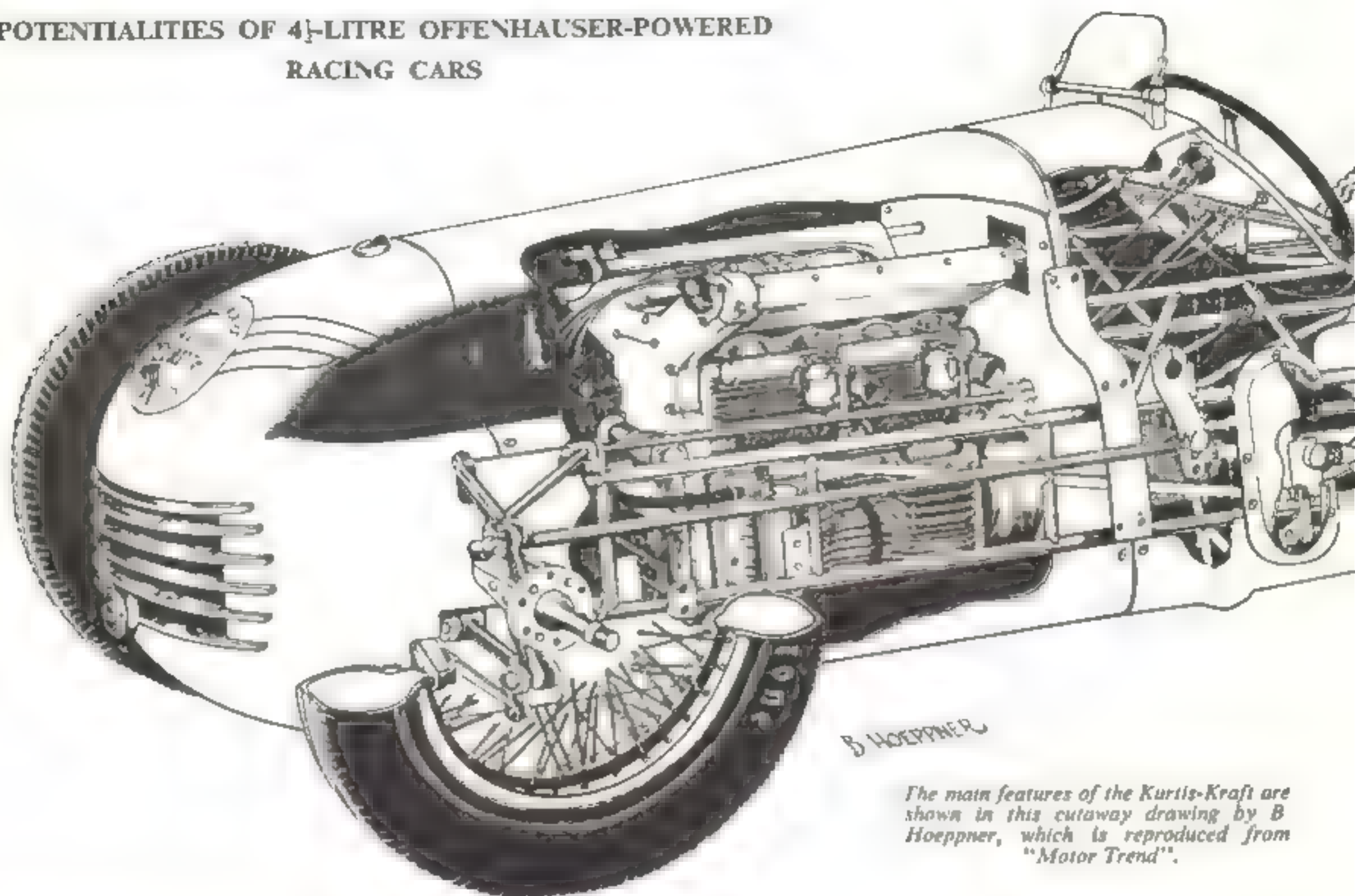
Class "I" (up to 500 c.c.).—Drivers, Stirling Moss, Ken Gregory, and Jack Neill.

50 Kilos, 90.06 m.p.h.; 50 Miles, 90.63; 100 Kilos, 90.87; 1 Hour, 91.34; 100 Miles, 91.4; 200 Kilos, 88.6; 200 Miles, 86.99.



# An American Formula 1 Car?

POTENTIALITIES OF 4½-LITRE OFFENHAUSER-POWERED  
RACING CARS



*The main features of the Kurtis-Kraft are shown in this cutaway drawing by B Hoepfner, which is reproduced from "Motor Trend".*

THE success of the 4½-litre, unsupercharged Ferrari against supposedly much faster, blown 1½-litre cars, has given American racing car designers seriously to think. They now feel that the U.S.A. might have a reasonable chance of competing on level terms with Continental machines in International Formula 1 racing. Also, the successful trip to Le Mans last June by the Briggs Cunningham Cadillac has made it evident that from prestige angle, America cannot now afford to remain out of International racing.

For many years the Offenhauser "270", 4½-litre, 4-cylinder, unsupercharged engine has powered a large number of successful track cars, including the winner of the 1950 "rained off" Indianapolis 500 Miles Race, Johnny Parsons' Kurtis-Kraft Special, alias Wynn's Friction Proofing Special. This car was making its third appearance in the "five century grind", and was the self-same vehicle with which Parsons won the 1949 AAA National Championship. In the "500", the most significant fact was that the "conventional" Kurtis-Kraft, with its rear drive and its unblown motor, proved to be faster and more reliable than the much-fancied front-drive, and/or supercharged 3-litres. Actually, the Kurtis-Kraft approaches closely the European idea of a pukka road-

racing machine, rather than a typical American track job.

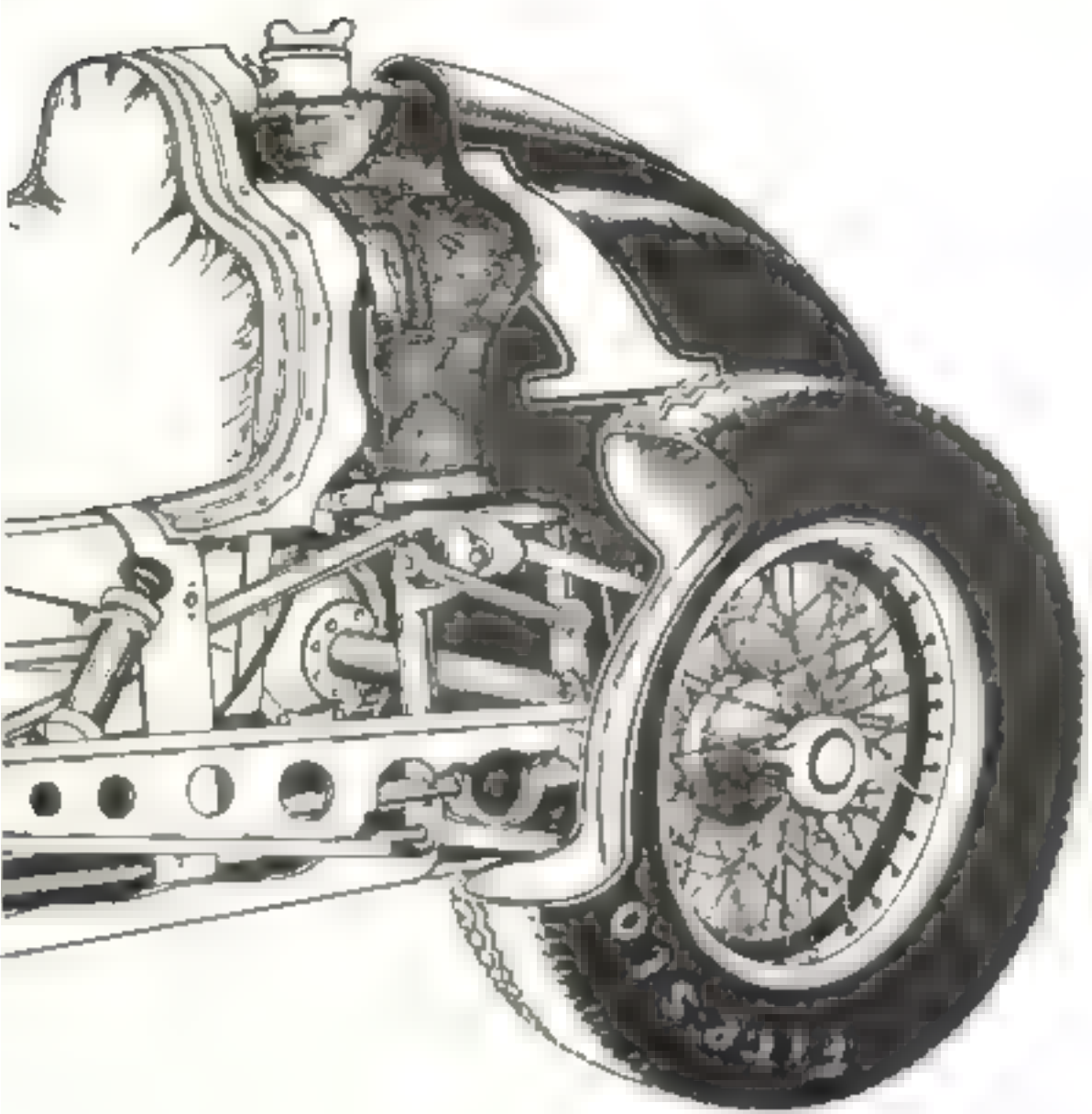
Kurtis-Kraft is the only American concern which produces series-built racing cars, and the marque was represented by five machines at Indianapolis. The Parsons type of car has provided the basis of the latest Kurtis-Kraft "3,000", which has a frontal appearance remarkably like our own B R M.

Apart from the use of light-alloy disc wheels, and a single, inboard rear brake-drum, the chassis is little altered from the Indianapolis victor. It can be supplied with a choice of several engines, such as the "big four" 4½-litre "Offy" (Meyer-Drake), and the smaller, supercharged 6-cylinder Sparks-Thorne, or the latest Cummins diesel which is also a "six".

## 4½-Litre "Four"

However, it is the "big four" which must be considered in so far as International Grand Prix racing is concerned. This twin-camshaft engine is known to produce around 300 b.h.p. on alcohol fuel with a 12 to 1 compression ratio, a figure certainly not obtained by Lago-Talbot with their latest "six". The power-output of the unblown Ferrari engine is the subject of much speculation, and





may not even be greater than the newest Meyer-Drake-built Offenhausers.

Nevertheless the possession of a fine 4½-litre engine does not necessarily mean that Americans could pop it into a raceworthy Grand Prix chassis overnight. Although the specification of the Kurtis-Kraft, at least on paper, sounds ideal for Grand Prix work, actually the car could not hope to compete on level terms in its present form.

#### Technical Features

The chassis is of the deep-truss, tubular pattern, with torsion bar and wishbones suspension (independent at front). The rear axle is located by the usual American practice of fitting pivoting radius arms, and the axle itself is of the quick-change ratio type. Front wheels are not interconnected by a tie rod, steering being affected by the use of separate drag links. Hydraulic brakes are used, and the fuel tanks are of the flexible aircraft type, made of rubberized fabric.

Power-weight ratio must at least be comparative with European Grand Prix cars, for the complete vehicle weighs just 1,650 lb., and the chassis (less engine, gearbox and accessories) scales a mere 1,030 lb. However the brakes fall short of Grand Prix standards, which must be expected owing to the lack of knowledge of modern Grand Prix requirements possessed by the average American race-car designer. This would not, of course, prove an insurmountable difficulty, as there are many European ex-Formula cars in the U.S.A. with sufficiently good braking to provide data for development. The 3-litre Mercedes-Benz alone would soon put brake designers on the right lines.

From all accounts the Kurtis-Kraft handles extremely well. Indianapolis, despite its shape, does require exceptionally good steering and road-holding when the track begins to become slippery owing to dropped oil. Experts predicted that Parsons' car would be uncontrollable, but the opposite proved to be the case. The specially-designed front-drive cars were more unstable after the rain fell than the more orthodox Kurtis-Kraft.

#### Road Race-ability

The design has shown its versatility, not only at Indianapolis and in the "Three A's" Championship events, but also in that unique American affair, the Pike's Peak mountain climb. In this, true road racing conditions were more closely approached, even if some of the loosely surfaced corners permitted "dirt" methods of sliding, and Kurtis-Kraft built a special machine, externally similar to the new 3-litre, but powered by the "270" 4½-litre "Offy". With hydraulic front brakes, torsion bar i.f.s., that clean "B.R.M." style radiator grille, and rear tyres larger than the front, the whole job is very reminiscent of European G.P. practice. Driven up the difficult, winding, twelve-and-a-half-mile mountain road by Louis Unser, America's Raymond Mays in hill-climbing, the car made third fastest time of the day, 27 secs. slower than winner Al Rogers' car, also Offenhauser-powered. Unser still holds the record, however, with his figure of 15 mins. 28.7 secs., made in 1946 on a 3-litre Maserati—another European emigrant which could probably still teach U.S. engineers much of value in brake and suspension design.

Undoubtedly the 4½-litre Kurtis-Kraft could be developed into a most formidable Grand Prix car, provided its designers came over to Europe and carefully studied Formula 1 requirements. Whether or not its sponsors feel that the considerable financial outlay necessary to enter full-scale Grand Prix racing would be justified is another matter. However, there must be several Americans who would gladly provide financial backing, if they felt fairly certain that an all-American car would keep its end up in international racing, and help to break the years-old monopoly of the Europeans.

America's last full-scale onslaught on European road racing was as long ago as 1921, when four extremely handsome and cleverly designed 8-cylinder 3-litre Duesenbergs came to Le Mans for the first post-Great War French Grand Prix. With new Ballots and various S.T.D. designs the Americans' chances weren't greatly fancied. "What, after all, did they know of brakes and road-holding, who careered around on cinder and board tracks?" was the gist of the belittlers' arguments. But the Duesenbergs won most convincingly, and what can be done once can be done again.

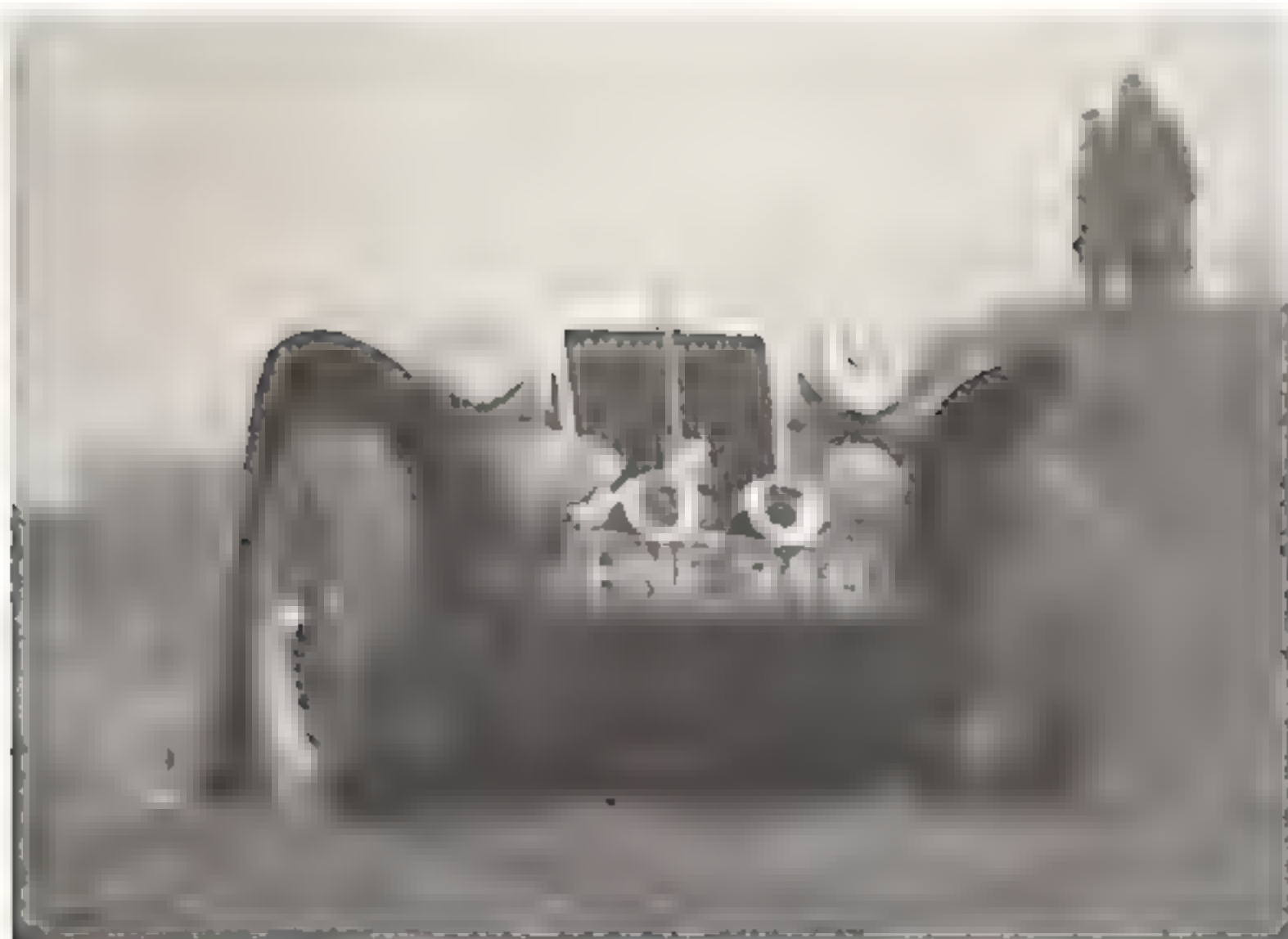
Naturally American enthusiasts cannot look to their motor industry for support in full-scale road racing with formula cars, but as in the case of the B.R.M., there are many components and accessories manufacturers who might easily be persuaded to back such a venture.

After all, for the world's greatest producer of motor vehicles to take a back seat in international racing cannot be other than harmful to the future of American automobile exports, particularly in the Latin-American countries where motor racing is rapidly becoming a major sport.



## SPORT M

VINTAGE S.C.C. AT SOUTHP  
A.C. TRIAL—THE OTHER



Above). R. W. Farnworth's MG breasting the "Hump" at the Quarries in the recent M.G.C.C. (N.W. Centre) Kimber Trophy Trial



Mrs. Emily Dowling's A40 Austin does a spot of marker-upsetting during Test C in the Easter A.C.'s 16th November Trial. The event had to be abandoned, owing to heavy rain washing away the dye used to indicate the route.

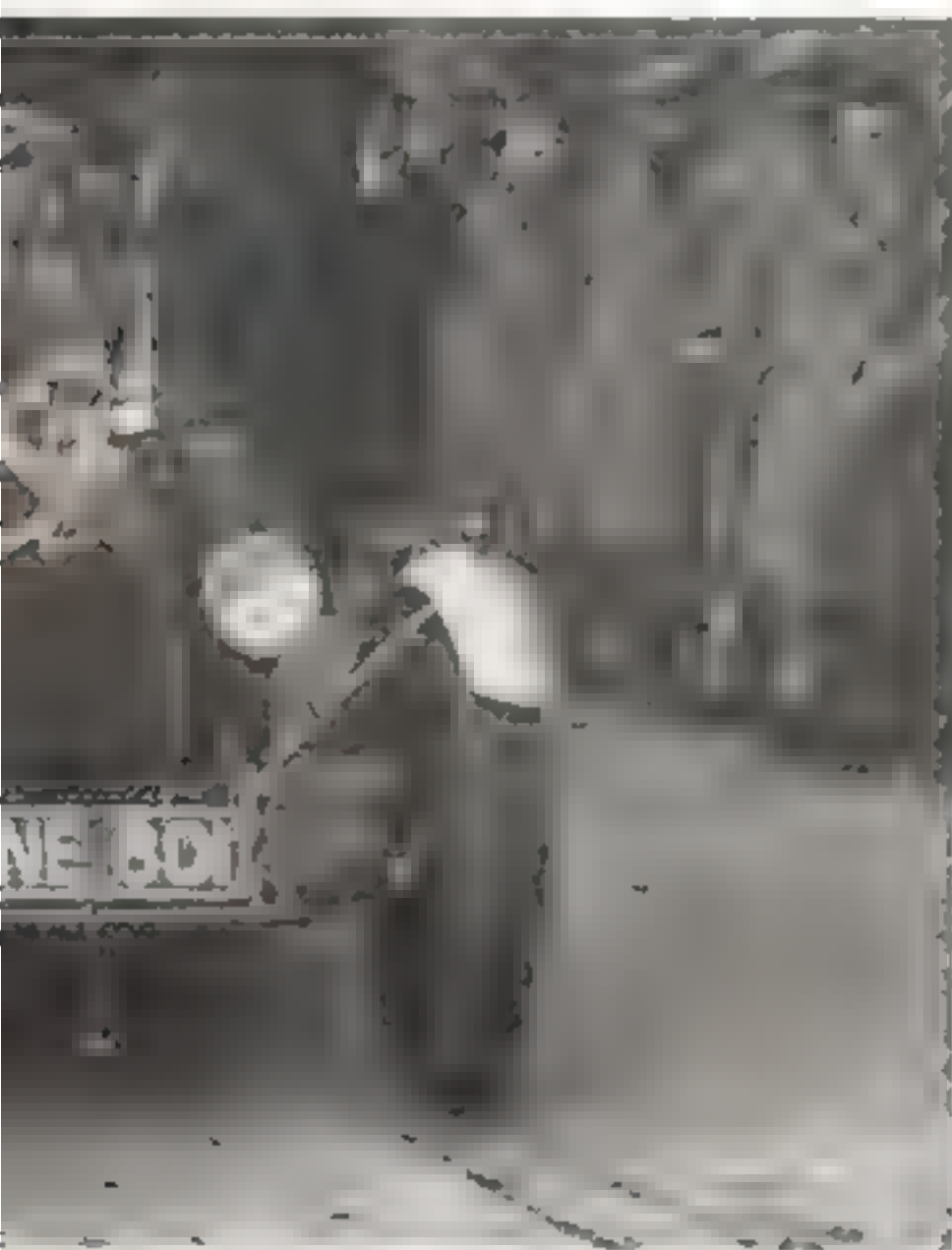


Onslow Bartlett's earlier "special" is now owned by J. C. S. fitted it with this curious-looking circular "radiator". He i Warren, during the recent "Cottingham".



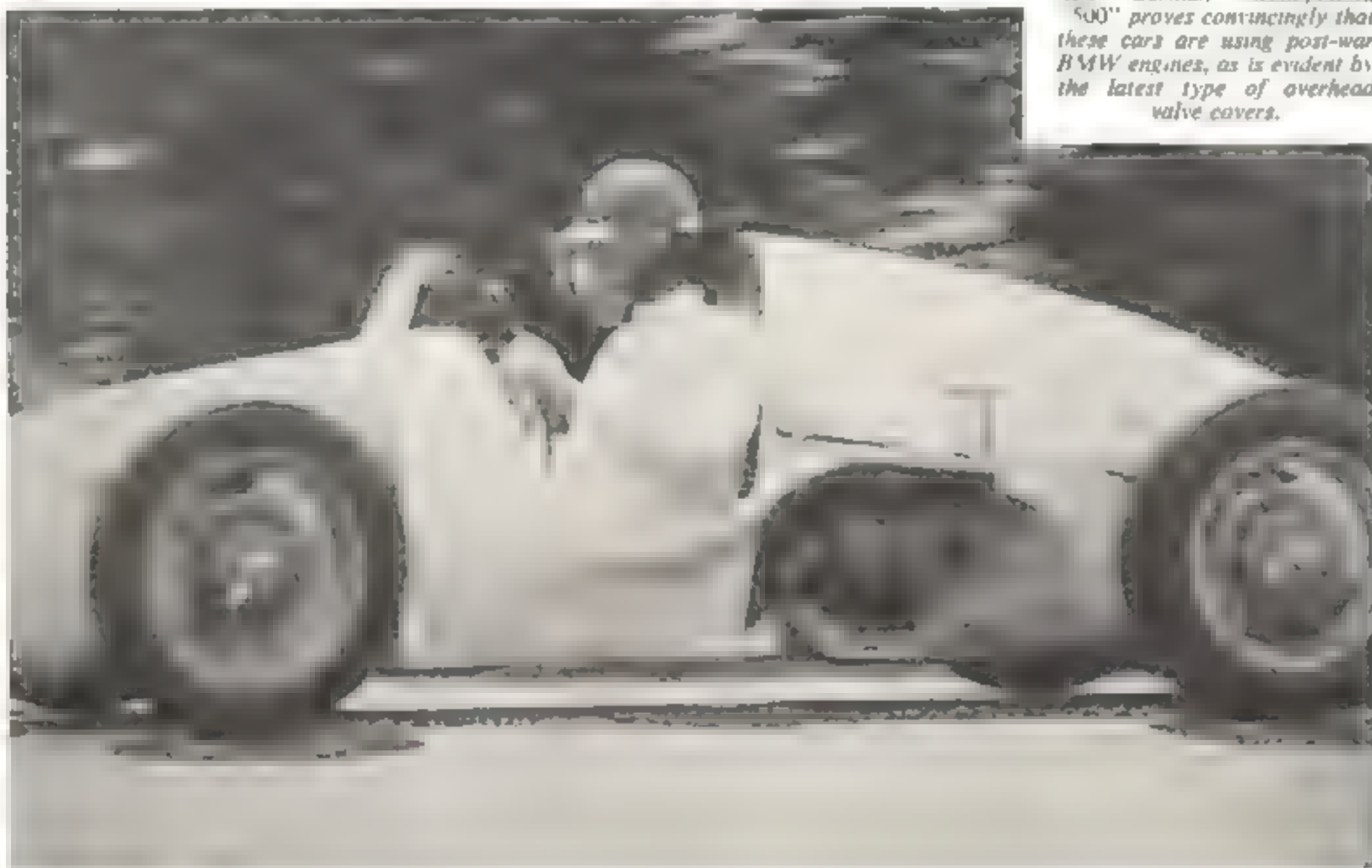
# MISCELLANY

RT—M.G. KIMBER TROPHY—ULSTER  
BARTLETT—BMW-POWERED "500"



*F.S.C.C. Week-end Rally to Southport (Above)  
Judging the event. Concours winner S. N. McKenzie's  
1925 Sunbeam. (Left) A. Howarth (Bugatti) in the  
starting-from-cold test*

*(Below). This close-up of the  
new German Monopolella  
"500" proves convincingly that  
these cars are using post-war  
BMW engines, as is evident by  
the latest type of overhead  
valve covers.*



*with, who has  
seen here at*



# The Overhead Camshaft M.G.s

## Their Overhaul, Maintenance and Tuning

by

**Philip H. Smith**

A.M.I.Mech.E.



THE rocker-shaft bushes are extremely long lived, as the loading is very light. If it is decided that the bushes require renewing, the work is not difficult and is well within the scope of an average fitter. The clearance of the bush to the rocker shaft is not critical, but excessive shake must be avoided, the ideal to aim at being a free running fit without shake. Remember that the act of clamping the cam-follower on the outside of the bush will have the effect of tightening up the bush on the shaft, and therefore the allowed clearance should take note of this. The best method to adopt is to reamer the bush to fit the rocker shaft, with the cam-follower already in position and clamped tightly on the outside of the bush. The use of an expanding reamer will enable the clearance to be judged to a nicety.

### Alignment of Follower, Cam and Valve Stem

The importance of correct lie of the follower in relation to the cam and the valve stem has already been dealt with when considering the method of adjustment by means of the eccentric bushes. If the valve seats have been recut, or maybe for some other reason, it is quite possible that even with the followers correctly set, the lie may be slightly inaccurate, due to too long a valve stem. The ideal to aim at is that with the valve in the half-open position, a line drawn through the centre of the rocker shaft bush to the follower tip should meet, at right angles, a line drawn vertically through the axis of the valve. In this connection it is important to note that the centre of the rocker shaft bush is NOT the centre of the shaft, as the bush is eccentric to the shaft. However, a little experimenting with the camshaft and rockers in place will enable the correctness of the dimensions to be judged, and if necessary a small amount should be ground off the tip of the valve stem to get everything perfect. In grinding, take care to keep the surface flat and at right angles to the valve stem, and do not take too much metal off. The valve stem length is not vitally critical within small limits, and unless the aforementioned check reveals that the stem is quite a bit too long, it is preferable to let well alone. At the same time, it is essential that the check should be made, just in case. A temporary reassembly of the camshaft and rocker shafts will show whether the spacing tubes on the rocker shafts allow the followers to take up their correct positions. Each follower must lie centrally under its cam, and not to one side. If correct it will be found that the follower tip is absolutely in line above the valve stem. If it is allowed to deviate to one side or the other, irregular and rapid wear of both follower and cam will result. If the existing spacing tubes do not fill the bill in this respect, new ones can easily be made from light-gauge steel tubing. Although, obviously, excessive side-play in the followers is undesirable for the reason mentioned above, sufficient must be allowed to give free running; this should amount only to the merest trace of side movement. If a final check is made

when the job is assembled for keeps, and adjustment made if necessary by lightly grinding the spacers, the clearance will be obtained to a nicety. This final check is advisable as small clearances have an uncanny habit of disappearing as assembly proceeds!

### Assembling the Valve Gear

Assuming that all oilways have received attention (not forgetting the provision of the necessary oil-ducts in the new bushes, if fitted) the valve gear components can be considered as ready for assembly. Attention will have been given to the cams, as described earlier, in the way of removing minor scoring. The camshaft bearings should not present any difficulty, but if excessive wear is present no attempt should be made to rectify this by removing metal from the bearing standards or their caps. The bearing shells should be re-metalled and the camshaft bearing surfaces dressed with a lap to remove any scoring. If the wear is reasonable, and there is no measurable up-and-down play when the shaft is in position with the bearing caps tight, leave well alone. The test for up-and-down play should be made at the bevel end of the shaft, and of course is done with no components other than the camshaft in position.

The camshaft bearings allow for a definite degree of endplay on the shaft, which is under the control of a large spring washer located between the bevel and the front bearing housing. This spring washer serves to keep the bevel wheel and pinion firmly in mesh, providing smooth running and silence. There is no need to remove the washer if it is in good condition, but obviously if it appears at all doubtful or shows signs of loss of tension it should be renewed.

### The Camshaft Bevel Gear

Examination of the bevel gear teeth should be carefully carried out. Unless some untoward incident has occurred during the previous running of the engine, the teeth should stand up well as they are of ample area, and the spring thrust washer ensures full tooth contact. Chipped teeth cannot be allowed to pass, since if one tooth is chipped the others must be suspect. It is unlikely, however, that such will be found, and the most serious fault will probably be a little roughness at the tooth edges which is readily corrected with a carborundum slip. There is no need to go to elaborate lengths to check the meshing of the gear teeth. Just note that the inner edges of the teeth on the respective wheels are level with each other at the point of contact, so that the full tooth width



is doing its stuff. If there is any discrepancy here it can be corrected by careful shimming of the vertical shaft housing.

The bearings in the latter have a pretty hard life (they are of the Hyatt roller type). It is often found that considerable shake develops at this point after a big mileage, and neglect to remedy this will eventually lead to trouble with the flexible coupling and the top dynamo bearing, if nothing worse. If this shake is present, it is advisable

to have the whole vertical shaft unit complete with housing, renovated by an M.G. specialist, who will, in addition to renewing the bearings ensure that the thrust washer and oil thrower disc are fitted in their correct positions. Incorrect fitting of these components is liable to cause a serious oil leak from the housing, with dire results to the dynamo.

(to be continued)

## Book Reviews

### 500 c.c. Racing.

Author: Gregor Grant.

Size: 5½ × 8½ in., 178 pp.

Price: 10s.

Publishers: G. T. Foulis and Co. Ltd., 7 Milford Lane, London, W.C.2.

On opening *500 c.c. Racing*, by Gregor (never heard of him) Grant, one is faced by a Foreword, and with its very first sentence I disagree most violently. "This book," says Gregor, "is not a 'How to build a Five Hundred' Manual". Well, if it isn't that, it's the nearest thing to it, for the information it contains would be invaluable to any aspiring constructor. Not only are all the "five hundreds" described in great detail, but the correct conclusions are drawn from the results obtained.

I hasten to add that this is not a dry-as-dust technical treatise, and the personalities in the game get just as much space as the cars that have made them famous. Furthermore, it is pleasant to record that many hard triers, who have never yet seen the chequered flag, are treated just as fairly as the glamour boys of the sport.

After the Foreword, the historical side of the movement is discussed, and due credit given to the pioneers. This is a good thing, for it will avoid many arguments in years to come as to how it all started. In passing, it is almost incredible that less than five years ago not a single British 500 c.c. car existed; now the class is internationally recognized, and no big race meeting would be complete without an event for the little fellows.

The chapter called "The Amateur Builders" will be devoured by would-be "specialists", for it is full of the most carefully collected data. This need not frighten away the non-technical reader, though, for the more serious details are interspersed with anecdotes and reminiscences, and the whole is written in a light and easy style. Naturally there is a Cooper chapter, too, and even the most obscure foreign machines are on parade.

Every possible type of engine is discussed, and it is fitting that the Speedway J.A.P. gets a chapter all to itself. At first, one gets the impression that the material is rather mixed up, and presented in no particular order. Gradually it dawns on one that this is done deliberately, so that the effect of a continuous narrative is obtained. By jumping continuously from cars to chaps and from chaps to engines, the story is made to unfold itself, and by the time he has finished the last chapter, the reader suddenly realizes that he has become quite an expert on "five hundreds"; next time he goes to a race meeting, he

will gain added enjoyment by feeling that he is on the inside of the game.

A book of this type can be made or marred by its illustrations. In this case, the photographs are excellent, and the author has obviously taken a lot of trouble to get some uncommon ones. In particular, the many pictures of foreign "five hundreds" are of the greatest interest, and may easily give our own constructors some new ideas.

It was high time somebody wrote a book about "five hundreds", and I am glad that Gregor Grant has done it. His tremendous enthusiasm for the little machines is obvious throughout, and helps to make this a very readable volume.

JOHN BOLSTER.

\* \* \*

### British Motor Cars, 1950-51.

Compiler and Editor: A. H. Lukins.

Size: 7½ × 9½ in., 128 pp.

Price: 7s. 6d.

Publishers: George Ronald, 2 Alfred Street, Oxford.

THIS book is a mine of information on current British cars, describing all 1951 models including such recent arrivals as the Ford Consul and Zephyr, the Lanchester 14 and the Cooper and Marauder sports cars. Regular readers of the weekly motoring papers need not sigh and pass by, however, for this is no arid collation of car designs they have read about already. The new models are dealt with most adequately, and the chapters and tables on each marque should constitute a useful reference for those in search of speedy information. But, more than that, preceding the 1951 cars section is a lengthy and interesting "introduction" giving the origin and history of every British marque still in production. Of the many illustrations, some betray their catalogue origin, but there is pictorial variety a-plenty in the introductory pages, including one or two "Alpine" and racing scenes, numerous factory production views, and car close-ups. Something for everyone, indeed, is offered in this book, and while it does not purport to cover sporting affairs, it is at least race conscious, for on turning the cover one finds, first, a Foreword by Raymond Mays, and then two pages devoted to a brief description of the B.R.M. and an invitation to support it by Donald McCullough, Chairman of the B.R.M. Research Trust.

C. P.

(continued overleaf)



## Book Reviews—continued

## Speed—The Book of Racing and Records

Authors: John Cobb, Raymond Mays, Reg Parnell, Lt.-Col. Gardner, the staff of "The Motor" and many others.

Size:  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 10$  in. 136 pp.

Price: 7s. 6d.

Publishers: Temple Press Ltd., Bowling Green Lane, London, E.C.1.

A LARGE and well-produced book, chockful of interesting matter on motor, motor-cycle, cycle and boat racing, world records, transatlantic liners, railway and air achievements, all at the price of 7s. 6d., is a proposition hard to resist and one, in particular, which should smooth the furrowed brows of those in search of a Christmas gift for 'teen-agers. Neither speed nor this book, however, are exclusive to youth, and "boys" of all ages can enjoy it openly without loss of face.

Motor racing takes a goodly share of its 136 pages, and there are well-illustrated chapters on various branches of the sport by such eminent authorities as John Cobb, Lt.-Col. Gardner, Reg Parnell, Raymond Mays, Rodney Walkerley, Douglas Tubbs and Col. Barnes of the R.A.C. Driver Reg Parnell tells of one of his most thrilling races, the twenty-mile Goodwood Trophy race of 1949, when Peter Walker forced that recalcitrant "beastie", the E-type E.R.A., to do its stuff for once and gave Reg and his 4 CLT Maserati the race of their life. In another chapter it is refreshing to read, at last, the Raymond Mays side of that classic International Trophy Mays-Bira duel in 1936, when Mays with the works E.R.A. lost by a mere second in a 260-mile race.

The Grand Prix fan is well catered for both in text and pictures, and R. L. Walkerley reviews famous motor races and reminds us of that great occasion when the immortal Dick Seaman won the German Grand Prix in 1938 with a Mercedes. Lt.-Col. "Goldie" Gardner describes what 200 m.p.h. feels like in a 12 h.p. car—his M.G., of course—and Tubbs writes a chapter on great British racing drivers, in which it is pleasingly novel to read of W. Williams, hitherto "the Anglo-French enigma" who indisputably was an Englishman, albeit he resided at Deauville and drove works Bugattis.

Among the numerous intriguing photos a pit scene at Rheims before the 1948 French G.P. shows two of the inglorious CTA-Arsenals (both of which non-started) and two 158 Alfas, a rare and noteworthy occasion, one feels, yet one surprisingly neglected by the caption. The book contains a certain amount of "screaming tyres clawing at the road" luridness here and there, but the tolerant smile of the adult reader will soon be replaced by that glazed look of concentration as he reads on.

Of the other sections, no race lover could fail to be thrilled by Freddy Frith's gripping account of his struggle for the 350 c.c. class Swiss motor-cycle G.P. last year. Boats, planes, bikes, locos... all are there to be read about and the whole book gives good entertainment without requiring to be frowned over too earnestly. Any frown it engenders is more likely to be on Junior's brow on perceiving his Christmas gift inexorably in the hands of its donor!

C. P.

## Speed from the Sports Car

Author: "Calculus".

Size:  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  in. 190 pp.

Price: 7s. 6d.

Publishers: The Motor World Publishing Co., Ltd., 73 Dunlop Street, Glasgow, C.1.

HERE is another extensive work on speed at a very modest 7s. 6d. but this time the subject is specifically that of wresting speed from the sports car, a hobby pursued ardently by many enthusiastic amateurs and one on which the author is an established authority. AUTOSPORT readers may not know him as "Calculus", author of *The Sports Car Engine*, but they certainly know him as Philip H. Smith, A.M.I.Mech.E., author of our regular technical feature, "The Overhead Camshaft M.G.s".

In concise but easily understood language, "Calculus" covers the whole subject of preparing and tuning sports cars of various types up to competition standards, beginning with a survey of the materials involved, the principles of the i.c. engine, the fuels required for higher performance and the effects of increased working pressure on the power unit. He then gets down to means of achieving the main object—more power—dealing first with pre-stripping tasks such as checking standard ignition and valve timings, then instructs on dismantling the engine, and examining the bores, pistons and bearing surfaces.

The author neglects nothing, proceeding with meticulous thoroughness to the subject of valves, improvements to the inlet and exhaust tracts, and to valve guides, springs, etc. We are now deep in the quest for higher performance and efficiency, and ensuing chapters deal with choice of compression ratios and that vital appurtenance, the head joint; modifications to valve gear, attention to pistons and cylinder bores and the fitting of gudgeon pins and piston rings, etc. He then turns to the lower half of the engine and advises on crankshaft problems and main and big end bearings, including an interesting page or two on Vandervell thin wall bearings, their structure and means of fitting. Chapters on valve timing, camshafts and lubrication follow, then the electrical side in all its complexities is adequately dealt with, likewise carburation and fuel pumps, leading to an intriguing survey of superchargers, their value as performance boosters and means of installation. The cooling and exhaust systems come next and "Calculus" winds up with plugs, flywheel lightening, final assembly and carburettor tuning. An appendix offers useful data and formulae for calculating performance, and supercharger performance data.

At a time when interest in motor sport is so high, keen amateur drivers are able to compete with modified sports cars in numerous airfield races, sprints, hill-climbs and other competition work in Britain. This handbook should prove invaluable to them as a guide to high speed tuning of sports cars while averting the financial perils of overdoing things, "Bumping up the compression, old boy" and other over-enthusiastic modifications to standard engines are oft productive of costly "gasket" troubles, and to follow the line counselled by "Calculus" will prove both wiser and less expensive.

C. P.





## WHY NOT A HALF-LITRE 200 MILES RACE?

500 c.c. racing has grown from a timorous infancy, through thriving childhood to robust maturity. In the first circuit race held for the new class, over 9.2 miles at Gransden Airfield in July, 1947, only one car, Eric Brandon's Cooper, survived the nine minutes' running these motor-cycle-engined racers had to do. Now, after four seasons, we have regular 500 c.c. races over distances of around fifty miles, plus the 500 Club's 100 mile race at Silverstone, and numerous Continental races over circuits as diverse as that at Rheims, the Ostend Airfield, Zandvoort, and the famous round-the-houses Monaco course, yet in all these events *les racers* have survived. So impressive has been their showing that the 500 c.c. class was accorded International recognition as Formula 3 early in 1949.

The ever-increasing number of 500 c.c. events on various British circuits is developing a tougher, less brittle breed of half-litre racer. Cars like the Coopers, Alf Bottom's J.B.S. and Parker's Special, etc., compete in race after race throughout the season. Doubtless during this time their engines and transmission receive good attention (what racing engine does not?) but the remainder of the vehicles probably get far less molycoddling than their larger G.P. counterparts. The "500s" have, in fact, proved their capacity for serious racing and continue to grow in popularity with race organizers and spectators.

Is not, then, the time approaching when a full length race for these lusty babies can be staged? Why not,

indeed, revive a famous name in history, and hold a half-litre 200 Mile Race? The original J.C.C. 200 Miles Race at Brooklands in 1921, remember, brought together a large entry of cycle-cars and light cars, the majority of which looked far too precarious ever to last the distance, only a few entries like the 1,500 c.c. Talbots and Bugatti and Salmons having that durable look about them. Yet those spidery cars survived or, if they failed, benefited from the experience and grew sturdier. The race, too, survived up to 1928, in its original form. Revived in 1936, it had lost much of its unique character, becoming just another road race, albeit an interesting one, which lasted alas, only to 1938, since when the classic name has been absent from the calendar. A significant link has, however, been forged between the famous race and 500 c.c. racing, for in this year's Goodwood International 500 Trophy the principal award was the André Gold Cup, donated in years gone by to winners of the "200".

In the 500 Club's 100 Miles Race at Silverstone this year, the mortality rate was very high; out of twenty-four starters, only five finished. This might seem to indicate that to attempt to double the distance would be suicidal, but if adequate time is available for thorough preparation, and adequate reward is offered for success, entries would surely not lag. In short, give the race *status*, organize it well, pay good starting money, and get some D.B.s, Effyhs, Beels-Japs,

and so on, from overseas to battle with our Coopers, Kiefts, the J.B.S., Parker, etc., and make it a real classic.

The need to cover 200 miles would demand a high degree of reliability and would substitute any hint of freakishness in 500 c.c. design by a stamina which could only prove of ultimate benefit to design. The engines which power many of these cars propel racing motor-cycles over distances of 250 miles and more under the most arduous of conditions, so the suggested distance should be far from impossible. Pit stops for refuelling, etc., would be necessary, which would add spice and spectacle to the event from the point of view of the watching (and paying) public. Even if they can't all gather opposite the pits area, it is exciting to see "So-and-so" nipping ahead when "Such-and-such" goes in to refuel and then to watch the latter making up for lost time, in real G.P. style. A 200 Miles Race could be beneficial all round; it would be a major event, rather than the sideshow to G.P. races, many "500" races currently are; it would develop more reliable cars, and a tougher, more experienced breed of driver, making Formula 3 an even more useful school for later Grand Prix work—and Britain needs G.P. drivers—not merely for 1951, but for the years to come.

Doubtless the suggestion will bring forth a chorus of "But hang it alls", the loudest probably to the effect that it will "cost the earth", that it will merely carry the 500 movement further from the "amateur" path originally laid for it. This seems irrevocable with any progressive movement, however, and while manufacturers, not only in Britain, but in France, Sweden, Finland, Germany and soon, it is anticipated, Italy, take keen interest in the class, now surely is the time to bring them together and stage a truly great contest. Possibly a special class for amateurs could be included as well, but the expense involved in preparation might limit entries. Better, perhaps, to stage a shorter distance curtain raiser for the "home-built", and have them play the role so often played at race meetings by the more professional 500s.

Wild yearnings? True, it is easy to pay good starting money, to organize thoroughly, to bring over Continental entries, etc.—*on paper*. But how interesting and exciting a half-litre 200 Miles Race could be!



# The Motoring Microphone

BOTHERS OF A B.B.C. BROADCASTER

By Raymond Baxter

BROADCASTING a commentary is in many ways quite like competition motoring. The problem is one of dealing neatly and efficiently with a series of constantly changing situations. At the risk of calling streams of abuse upon my unprotected pate, I would even go so far as to say that in most cases handling a microphone leaves an even smaller margin for error than handling the controls of a fast car. I can unfortunately quote a horrid case in point.

During the night of this year's Le Mans, I intended to inform the breathless public which driver was leading the race. My mind selected Louis Rosier, but my tongue engaged Louis Chiron, who was of course relaxing happily at a winter resort hundreds of miles away at the time. Consequently my friends said, "Ah, clearly the fellow is very tired", while those with whom I have not yet had the pleasure of taking alcohol screamed "CLOT!"—or even less printable and more descriptive nouns. How right they were!

However, which of the drivers in the Le Mans race did not make one reactional error in the course of the twenty-four hours, and, excluding those who went up a tree, have time to effect a correction? If you "shp a cog" with a microphone, you're *always* up a tree!

Please don't think that this is leading up to a declaration that the broadcaster's lot is not a happy one. It seems to me an essential ingredient of human happiness to be keen on one's job, and who would deny that talking about one's favourite sport is a reasonable way of earning the house-keeping money?

## Broadcasting—Hard Work

There again, there are those who seem to think that broadcasting merely consists of travelling at someone else's expense to point A, picking up a microphone, and doing thirty minutes of concentrated gassing without the slightest fear of interruption. Strangely enough, a truly enormous amount of work has to be done both before the microphone is picked up, and after it is laid down again. Also, the job starts many weeks before the event. Work on last year's Monte Carlo broadcasts was started in mid-November, and this year, encouraged by the Listener Reaction figures of 1950, our plans are slightly more complicated.

Our colleagues of the printed word, to whom all honour as being as friendly and co-operative a bunch of boys as one could wish, have the advantage of being able to pause and consider their output to the Great British Public, before filing the story for the scrutiny of their editors. The radio commentator's "Editor" can only scrutinize his output at the same time as you do—and that is coincident with his report of what is happening, as it happens. (I begin to terrify myself with this argument!)

But the job of broadcasting motoring events is, like the sport itself, by no means devoid of its lighter side.



*This drawing has to do with P.A. work rather than broadcasting. The interesting part is that it is the work of the son of famous Punch artist, Russell Brockbank.*

When for team-mates people like John Bolster and Godfrey Imhof are to hand, the dull moments are few and far between indeed.

There was the unforgettable occasion at Jersey when John was performing the oracle from the pits. Now that calls for a great deal of nimble footwork from counter to counter, trailing anything up to a hundred yards of microphone cable astern. Cable has a disastrous knack of looping itself around things, and as my fellow commentator was "doing a Bolster" from Whitehead's pit to Bira's, the "thing" in question happened to a lady's leg. In a twinkling, the obstruction was seized, lifted firmly from the ground, disentangled and replaced, without so much as a pause between sentences, or a run in a nylon!

## One Meets Nice People

Another thing about this broadcasting job is that one meets so many nice people. Unfortunately I have a shocking memory for names, and frequently have to resort to low practices. I now claim to be able to introduce four total strangers provided I can remember the name of one of them. But strangely enough, this seems to work equally well (or badly) in the opposite direction. Recently two of my friends had been subjected to long harangues on the merits and management of a particular racing motor car by gentlemen who were under the impression that they were addressing me. To complete the chaos, my friends had no idea who these characters were either!

Which just goes to show that it's very difficult indeed to have a live microphone to hand whenever you want one. But we still try!

On the Lisbon Rally, Imhof and I had a date with the microphone at St. Jean de Luz after the second night of driving. It was agreed that our "piece" should end with



the sound of the car being re-started and driven off towards the Pyrenees. All went well until the time came for me to press the starter button. But instead of the roar of the mighty engine, all we got was the dull click of a seized starter motor. The ensuing comments, which were all faithfully recorded, would undoubtedly have raised the eyebrows of the Director of the Spoken Word,

had they ever gone on the air. Fortunately the French recording engineers were more than competent to deal with such an emergency, and when we stopped to listen to the transmission from London some hours later, we heard ourselves draw smoothly away from the control as if nothing had gone amiss. Yes, on that occasion, it was certainly as well that a bit of "editing" was possible!

## Correspondence

WE are delighted to receive letters intended for publication. We do not insist on typewritten copy, but please write in a hand we can decipher, and on one side of the note-paper. The Editor is not, of course, bound to be in agreement with opinions expressed by readers, but this does not mean that subjects will be excluded on these grounds.

I AM writing to you, on behalf of a group of shallow pocketed enthusiasts at present building a 500 c.c. racer, in support of the views of your correspondent H. M. Woodcock.

We would advocate a completely separate branch to deal with non-production "500s" only, although we do not think that there should be any restriction on non-production cars entering for production car races. This would not handicap the factory-built cars in any way, but would provide a higher class to which the best of the non-production cars could aspire.

Non-production car racing could then be organized on a bigger scale and it is surely not too much to hope for non-production car meetings at Brands Hatch and the other tracks.

It is only fair to acknowledge that the Brands Hatch authorities have made a start in this direction by holding some non-production car races already, but although this is commendable it is not enough for the many people who would think seriously of taking up the sport, but for the high standard and numerical strength of the Cooper and Keft opposition.

P. J. HENDERSON.

LONDON, W.5.

YOUR contributor Russell Lewis, in mentioning the great Screw Hill shemuzzle about twenty-five years ago, has omitted the best part of the story.

So far as I remember, the club members were summoned under the Lord's Day Observance Act of 1627, under which people are forbidden to gather outside their own parishes for the purpose of games on Sundays.

The prescribed fine was duly announced whereupon the club's solicitor arose and requested that the members might undergo the alternative penalty. The Clerk hastily turned up the statute and found the alternative to be "Four hours in the stocks"!

After some confusion on the Bench the cases were dismissed!

H. K. HARDY

GLINTON, NR. PETERBOROUGH.

IN reply to your correspondent R. V. Cresswell in the 17th November issue of *Autosport*, I am the competitor in the recent *Daily Express* Rally referred to by him who had the misfortune to hole the tank of my 2½-litre Lea-Francis on the rocks of Bwylich-y-Groes, but I am not one of "these newcomers to rallying" who have been chasing about the countryside thinking they "were in a race" to quote the words of your correspondent, and neither did I meet any competitor who was acting in such a manner, and I speak as a motorist of quite a few years' experience of competition motoring.

I think the enterprise of the *Daily Express* in conjunction with the M.C.C. should be praised for organizing such an event. In view

of the popularity of the rally it was obvious that it would attract a large number of entries and many would be disappointed.

I entered as a member of the B.A.R.C. and I know for a fact that M.C.C. members did not receive entry forms in advance of B.A.R.C. members as your correspondent infers.

With the exception of the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Graphic* our newspapers show little interest in motor sport, so let us therefore give praise to those who support us instead of condemning them with destructive criticism.

I would like to add that the *Daily Express* published the full conditions of the rally including the average speeds to be maintained and certainly did not state or infer it was a race. The fact that one report stated that I was "out of the race" is surely only a figure of speech.

Finally, I should state that I am in no way connected with the *Daily Express* or the M.C.C.

C. M. B. KITE.

TAUNTON.

IN the article "Keeping Well Oiled", 17th November, Dr. J. R. Edisbury writes, "An interesting idea which never caught on but might be worth reviving . . . was the incorporation of a zinc compound which under high pressure was alleged to deposit metallic zinc on the teeth as fast as it wore off, so that the teeth themselves never wore at all". Your contributor asks if someone can confirm or amplify these particulars.

Dr. Edisbury is evidently referring to Keenol, Q.4224, manufactured by Alexander Duckham and Co., Ltd. I have been using this oil in the sliding pinion type gearbox of my Invicta for rather more than two years and, as far as I can judge, the claims which are made for it appear to be very well founded. That it quiets the indirect gears in a box of this kind there is no doubt, and where there is a reduction of noise there is likely to be a reduction of wear and tear.

JOHN H. AHERN, F.R.P.S.

LONDON, W.1

I HAVE a trials problem which I would like to bring up for discussion. All clubs are adamant on the subject of the banning of locked or controlled rear axles in trials, and some go to great lengths to ensure that the rule is not contravened. Yet most clubs make an exception in the case of the "chain gang" Frazer-Nash, which of course has a solid axle. Now, if the locked axle is deemed to be such a tremendous advantage, why do not more special builders use a Frazer-Nash base for their cars? Is it because a locked axle is not all it's cracked up to be?

Perhaps I am answering this question myself, when I state that I drive a Nash regularly in trials here, and my experience is that we fail on observed hills at the same point, or lower down than the average competitor with a "free" axle.

Might one of your more experienced readers can elucidate, or better still, would J. B. devote an article to the subject of "locked" versus "free" axles?

DUDLEY COLLEY.

CO. DUBLIN.

(\*Because a "special" with a locked axle is at once banned.—Ed.).

(more letters overleaf)



## Correspondence—continued

YOUR readers, in their wisdom, have proved on paper to their own satisfaction that the back wheels of a chain-driven car behave in various ways. Some allege that the wheels dig down into the ground, while others maintain that like the sparks they fly upwards. A third faction produces mathematical proof that they stop where they are, and the remainder assure us that it all depends.

An ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, and I proved the matter beyond all dispute on 19th November at various places between London and Brighton. The 1903 Pinhead Luree has side-chains and coil springs; it also has a very fierce clutch. I am delighted to say that it confirmed my article, and moved off in the typically "dig down" attitude of the chain-driven car.

This particular machine is very short and high, and on engaging the clutch, the torque reaction can be seen to rotate the whole car round the countershaft. The rear springs flatten right out as the axle and chassis approach each other, and the radiator rises several inches in front. In a long low car such as the Mercedes, which has a much greater polar moment of inertia than the old "Banghead," it can readily be understood that the tendency is for the rear axle to "dip" towards the chassis on acceleration, as I originally stated.

JOHN V. BUSTER

I was interested to read Mr. V. S. Johnson's letter in your issue of 17th November regarding the respective merits of the TC and TD Midget. May I suggest, however, that the pre-war TB Midget, with an identical engine, could get round corners faster than either. The one fault of the TC lay in the steering, which I considered fantastic, and, under certain conditions, positively dangerous. On the other hand, the TB steering was as perfect as the gearbox of a three types, than which no higher praise can be given.

Concerning performance, I do not imagine the TD can attain 45 in 2nd and 65 in 3rd without bursting, and I must admit that a cruising speed of 5,200 r.p.m. would give me with apprehension. But I must also say there were times when I cursed the stiff damping and car-springing lay-out of these older models.

LEWIS N. BATHO

LYTHAM, LANC.

IN reply to Mr. V. S. Johnson's letter regarding the TC and TD M.G. I am an owner of a TA, and being in the motor trade, have driven examples of the TB, TC, and TD models.

Mr. Johnson's spongy ride, as applied to the TD, I regard as nonsense. There is nothing spongy about it; the ride on the straight is far superior to the TC, and cornering is just as good as the TC, though the car does roll slightly.

Disc wheels are mentioned, and thank goodness they are fitted on the TD. No more re-spoking due to excessive cornering, or to clots hitting the spokes rather than the knock-off caps. The new wheels are a real treat, and as I am not a racing man, brake fade with normal driving and usage is practically non-existent.

I for one have eschewed the TC since 1946, awaiting the advent of an ideal car in the range. Now it is here I am impatiently awaiting delivery.

P. A. TONER

MITCHEM, SURREY

BEFORE we can discuss the merits of an car, it is necessary first to establish the needs which it must satisfy. I would, of course, we can no longer expect a pleasure car to be a car, a K3 Magnette from M.G. for that matter, from any other manufacturer who wishes to market a sports vehicle at a works price of well under £1,000. The necessity of producing a true racing car with a wheel base of at least 80 in. and a poor excuse for modifications provides the successful employment of mass-production methods of manufacturing. Performance must be out in the wet from the way forward and power must be to be in a one-way challenge. Shorter strokes, capable of 60 in 6 secs. and a maximum of 100 m.p.h. peak at a brand-new, ex-works price of under £2,000. I realize that such a car as itself form too small a number in the motor world, but it is to be a commercial proposition. My gentleman has made this abundantly clear. As I see it, the designers of the TD M.G. had to abide by four rigid principles:

(i) The price had to be below £500.

(ii) All-round comfort in hail, rain, or sunshine, and on concrete or cobblestones was an absolute 'must'.

(iii) Ample mudguards.

(iv) A reasonable luggage-space.

Plus as high a performance as possible without violating any of the above principles.

Now, in my humble opinion, and at the risk of receiving an assortment of bombs and poisoned chocolates by the next post, the first TD is in many ways an improvement on its illustrious predecessor. It has amply proved itself in events ranging from the Tourist Trophy to the Alpine Trial. On normal roads its performance is at least equal to that of the TC. If Mr. V. S. Johnson's TC has acceleration sufficient to "tease" a modern American Ford, then he is certainly the possessor of a very exceptional model, and it is, moreover, a much safer car. (If you have ever hit a pothole on a 65 m.p.h. bend in a cart springer you will know what I mean.) I am convinced that what suspension changes have been made have been for the best. The trouble with the TD is that such progressive modifications have not been carried to their logical conclusion. No doubt the 1960 body is a very pretty variation of what was a good design in 1956. And it has been selected on all sides by pseudo-vintagists with dubious cries of "Och! look, you can see its radiator," meaningless phrases such as "retro-car," and sundry other nostalgic utterances. The fact remains that not only a sports car which picks a large square of aerodynamic air, but also a cumbersome mass of 2,400 is as unwieldy and as unfunctional as a push-pin in Victorian underwear. I dislike the unnecessary masses of chromium-plated trawls which adorn many modern cars, with a hair as fervent as most, but if we must have luxurious mudguarding on our "sports" cars, in the cause of comfort, then at least let the resultant alien-looking body be of sound aerodynamical contours, and mounted on light steel tubes. If anyone doesn't think aerodynamics can be atractive, go take another look at a sports Ferrari.

The second greatest sin of the TD M.G. is its excess avoidances. The manner in which the lion-hearted little engine lags at and an added weight of 18 cwt. with such success in competitions, is indicative of its real potentialities in a chassis of reasonable weight. 18 cwt. for a modern two-seater sports car is far too heavy, and could be considerably lessened without having to resort to expensive alloys, and combined with a body of sound aerodynamic lines would end the designer's ever-shortcomings: low maximum speed, high piston speeds, increased petrol consumption, engine wear, etc., by means of a higher gear ratio, of course. Acceleration too would naturally be improved by the higher power/weight ratio and lesser rotational area.

The TD is a fine little car, and I for one am immensely grateful to Abegdon for producing a machine of some sporting character, at a price well below £1,000. But I believe strongly that more performance could be had by a car of the same price, without sacrificing anything in the way of safety, beauty of line, or general acceptability.

G. R. TURNER

GEOFF. D. UNDERHILL, M.A.  
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

I AM instructed to write on behalf of the Sheffield and Hallamshire Motor Club in reply to the letter of Mr. W. L. I. Winder in Autosport, 10th November.

Whereas the Club is only too pleased to receive constructive criticism at any time concerning its events, may I politely point out to Mr. Winder that the Club hardly considers it correct to take advantage of Press columns as a medium for this purpose.

G. S. BAILEY

Car Section Sec., Sheffield and Hallamshire M.C.  
SHEFFIELD, 11.

WE see so much in the Press about what should and should not be done about the B.R.M. We know a lot of money has been spent on it, but surely all of us who want to see British racing back on the map, could manage to donate the lowest subscription of 5s. to a very worthy cause.

K. COX

DUNSTABLE.



# News from the Clubs

## PROPOSED NEW GRAND PRIX FORMULA

### R.A.C. Invite Responsible Views

THE F.I.A. is now considering the composition of a new Formula to govern the eligibility of cars in International Grand Prix races, and the R.A.C. has been asked to submit the views of this country in advance of a conference to be held in Brussels next February.

As is known, the present Formula is due to expire at the end of 1953. Thus all formulae will be discussed, i.e. Formula 1 (up to 1,500 c.c. S. and 4,500 c.c. U/S), Formula 2 (up to 500 c.c. S and 2,000 c.c. U/S) and Formula 3 (up to 500 c.c. U/S and weighing not more than 200 kilograms).

In considering possible alternatives to the above, restrictions may be conveniently imposed as under, either singly or in combination.

- (a) Weight.
- (b) Swept volume of engine.
- (c) Use of a supercharger.
- (d) Type of fuel.
- (e) Consumption of fuel mixture.

AUTOSPORT therefore invites readers' comments and suggestions on these proposals. A selection of letters will be published from time to time in our correspondence columns, and genuinely constructive ideas will be forwarded to the R.A.C.

## EARL HOWE VINDICATES BLANDFORD

### West Hants and Dorset Dinner-Dance

NEARLY 300 members of the West Hants and Dorset C.C. and their guests were at the Grand Hotel, Bournemouth, on 24th November, for the annual dinner-dance. The Club's chairman, Mr. C. B. K. Milnes, took the chair, and the guests of honour were Earl and Countess Howe. Among the other guests were the Chief Constable of Bournemouth, Captain Bennett; Alderman A. H. Little, J.P., and the Commandant of Blandford Camp, Lt.-Col. Sherman, R.E.M.E. In his speech proposing the toast of "The Sport", Earl Howe said that motor sport had never been

Club Secretaries are invited to send details of the activities of their Clubs, for inclusion in this section. We would like you to regard this in the nature of a weekly Club Magazine, and a speedy way of informing your members as to future happenings.

so popular in this country as it is now. Before the war, in one Monte Carlo Rally there had been twelve competitors from Britain. For next year's Rally, seventy entries had been allocated to this country, and no fewer than 600 drivers had applied to be accepted. Before the war again, the Royal Automobile Club had issued about 1,000 competition licences a year. In 1950 they had issued more than five times that number.

Turning to racing, Earl Howe said that airfields were being used in many parts of the country and they were a fair substitute for the real thing, which is racing on normal roads. They did have one serious disadvantage, and that was that they encouraged a slovenly form of driving because of the width of the track, and because drivers knew that even if they did make a mistake they were unlikely to hit anything. In consequence when they went abroad and took part in road racing they were at a disadvantage.

### Blandford to be used again?

When the Blandford circuit first came into use, he welcomed it as the only place in Britain where a driver could gain the right sort of experience. He considered the course to be a really good one, and he deplored in strong terms the remarks which had been made about the Blandford circuit and about the W.H. and D.C.C. These remarks had been made by people who knew very little about motor racing, but they had unfortunately received very wide publicity. Those who knew all the facts knew that this censure was unjustified, and he concluded by saying that he was very glad to learn that there was every possibility of racing at Blandford being allowed again next year. As may be expected, these remarks received a very warm welcome from everyone present.

## NEW HILLS FOR "LOCKHART-BOSSINGHAM"

### Berko Classic on 10th December

THIS season's Lockhart-Bossingham Trophy Trial, organized by the Berkhamsted M.C. and C.C. starts from Acland and Tabor's garage on the Welwyn by-pass at 10.30 a.m. on 10th December. Intending spectators should note that full details of the route and "how to get there" will be available at the start from the Chief Marshal.

The event will be in entirely new territory, mostly on private ground and the Berko folk are confident that at least two of the hills in the thirty miles course will prove to be real stoppers. As Secretary Verdier says: "We go from one quarry to another!"

## M.G.C.C. MAKES MERRY

### N.W. Centre Dinner-Dance at Buxton

SOME 220 members and guests turned up at the Palace Hotel, Buxton, for the annual dinner-dance of the M.G.C.C. (North-West Centre). This was the usual lively affair. John and Joan Thornley, also committed to be at the Midland Centre's "do" at Droitwich, did some rapid motor-ing in John's 1½-litre and arrived just after 11 p.m.—stout effort!

Newlyweds Harry and Beryl Clark managed to spare one night of their honeymoon to attend, and newly-engaged Alan Rogers and Jean Sherwin, and Geoff Holt and Anne Gastrell were "played in" to the tune of "Me and My Girl".

Jack Twyford was in the chair, an office which he conducted with his usual aplomb. Pity no one thought to take a shot of Jack in "glorious Twyfordcolour" making his speech. The Editor of AUTOSPORT proposed the toast of "The Club" to which the Chairman replied. Toast of "The Guests" was in the hands of M.G. racing-driver and photographer George Phillips.

Peter Chettle replied, and during the course of his speech, paid many compliments to AUTOSPORT,

(continued overleaf)





*LOTUS. Michael Lawson on Pollyfields during the Kentish Border Sporting Trial on 26th November. He won the Committee Cup.*

## C.U.A.C. RALLY

### Scott-Brown's TD M.G. Wins

ON Sunday, 19th November, the Cambridge University Automobile Club's Rally attracted thirty-nine starters. The first car to be sent off was Barber's Fiat 500, and the last of the entry, J. V. Pledger's 4½-litre Bentley followed forty minutes later.

The rain, which threatened at the start, was not long in coming and the competitors had a wet ride for the major part of their journey round the south of London, through Chesham, Guildford, Wrotham, and Gt. Bardfield.

The event was finally won by Archie Scott-Brown's TD M.G., very capably navigated by Bill Roger and

## News from the Clubs—continued

particularly in regard to coverage of club affairs.

Reg Holt's wife, Edna, presented the prizes, of which Alan Hopkinson seemed to collect a fair share. It was to be regretted that many well-known trials folk did not turn up to collect their pots.

\* \* \*

## RILEY M.C. (NORTH-WESTERN CENTRE) CELEBRATES

### Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Dinner-Dance

IT was a particularly cheery gathering of 180 Riley enthusiasts and friends which took place at the Midland Hotel, Manchester, on Friday last. Things got off to a good start as, in contrast to common experience, there was plenty of room to circulate, and the ante-prandial drinks were brought round instead of having to be fought for. As a result the ice was well and truly broken before dinner was announced. Chairman Geoff Beetson, Hon. Sec. Maurice Wainwright and particularly Jimmy Cocker were indefatigable in seeing that everybody was happy.

The occasion was a notable one, being the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Club which had been founded at a party in Edinburgh following the London-Edinburgh Run of 1925. If any other of the now popular One Make Clubs can claim longer paren-

tage they had better raise their voices soon!

Speeches were kept commendably short and were rounded off in inimitable presidential style by Victor Riley himself. V. R. made a strong point of the extraordinary increase in popular enthusiasm for motoring sport—a subject on which AUTOSPORT cordially agrees! Dancing, with lots of spot prizes and mirth provocation continued until 2 a.m. Only one snag turned up—fog on the East Lancashire Road.

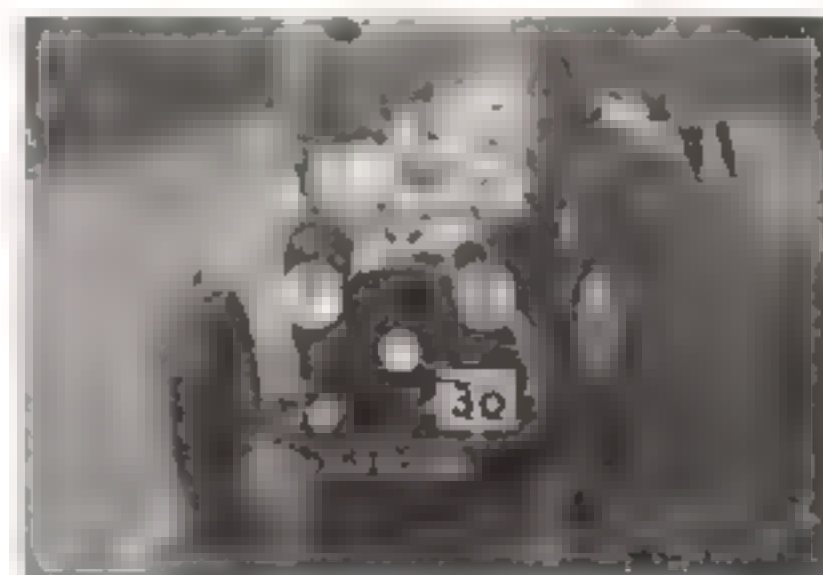
\* \* \*

## BRISTOL BANQUET

### Celebrities at Annual Dinner

DOUBTLESS due to the success of last year's function all available tickets are already taken up for the Bristol M.C. and L.C. Club's Annual Dinner, Dance and Prize-Giving on 14th December. The Lord Mayor, Mayoress and Sheriff of Bristol will be Guests of Honour and celebrities in the motoring world have accepted invitations. Proceedings commence at 6.30 p.m. at the Berkeley, Clifton, Bristol.

The Annual General Meeting of the Club takes place at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 19th December, at the Club Headquarters, Full Moon Hotel, Stokes Croft, Bristol. Concluding as it does the most successful year in the Club's history, a very full gathering is expected. Membership now nears the 550 mark.



*CANTAB. Maurice Preston's Aston Martin at the start of the C.U.A.C.'s 250 miles rally on 19th November. He gained a first class award.*

they were followed very closely by "Pat" Stark and "Sam" Salisbury in their Vauxhall Velox.

A large proportion of the competitors gathered afterwards in a Cambridge "cheer house" for a natter and made it obvious that they had on the whole enjoyed themselves.

## PROVISIONAL RESULTS

Best Performance—A. W. Scott-Brown (TD M.G.).

First Class Awards—R. P. N. Stark (Vauxhall Velox), H. K. Litherland (TC M.G.), F. H. Bullock (Lea-Francis), G. M. Preston (Aston Martin, 1½-litre), G. C. Spackman (Lagonda Rapier), R. A. Dods-worth (TC M.G.), R. E. Berry (Jaguar 3½-litre).

## AUTOSPORT BACK NUMBERS

REQUESTS for back numbers of AUTOSPORT should be sent direct to 32 Great Windmill Street, London, W.1.



## GAS TURBINE ENGINES

## R.A.C. Rating Accepted by F.I.A.

AFTER examining a report by the R.A.C. on a certain vehicle powered by a gas turbine engine, the Commission Technique Internationale of the F.I.A. adopted the method of rating proposed by the British organization. This means that this rating is the only official method of classifying a gas turbine engine in its present state of development.

The rating is as follows:—

The area, in square centimetres, of the air inlet to the compressor, measured in a plane perpendicular to the compressor axis at the leading edges of the first rotating vanes.

\* \* \*

## MOSBY TAKES "PENNINE"

Pennine Trophy—G. P. Mosby (1,172 Ford).

Best Opposite—R. Bateman (3,917 Ford).

First Class—A. D. Aldred (1,172 Ford), T. C. Harrison (1,172 Harford), J. C. Manscrieff (1,172 Austin).

Novice Award—T. C. Clapham (1,172 Gray Special).

Full report and pictures next week.

\* \* \*

## THE HAGLEY "ANNUAL"

THE Hagley and District L.C.C.'s Annual Dance will be staged this year at the Queen Mary Ballroom, Dudley Zoo, on Friday, 8th December, from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. A licensing extension has been granted on previous occasions, and is being applied for again. A good attendance is counted on so as to make a really cheery evening, and although dress is optional, wearers of coloured bow ties will be admitted. This, among others, means Ken Rawlings.

\* \* \*

## "BERKO" DINE AND DANCE

THE Berkhamsted Club held its Annual Dinner on 18th November at the King's Arms Hotel, Berkhamsted. About 100 guests attended. After a very enjoyable dinner and presentation of awards by Mrs. Rivers Fletcher, some of those present danced to music by Alex Miller's band, while the remainder sampled the various brews produced by the worthy Mr. Johnson of the King's

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

December 2. N.W. London M.C.

Gloucester Trial, C. 13.5.50.

December 23. M.G. C.C. (N.E.)

(Cottbus) 1950. Yards.

December 3. F.R. and Dist. L.C.C.

St. Albans, 1.3.50. R. 1.3.50.

December 4. C.C. (Hants) Trial.

December 5. F.R. and Dist. L.C.C.

Winter Sporting Trial, Cheshire.

Start 10.30 a.m., Navigation Hotel,

Woodley.

Berkhamsted M.C. and C.C. Lock-

hart-Bossingham Trial. Start 10.30

a.m., 3.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. at

Welwyn Bypass.

Maidstone and Mid-Kent C.C.

Committee Cup Trial, Kent.

N. Midland M.C. Autumn Sporting

Trial. Start 11 a.m. Peacock Inn,

Owlerton, near Sheffield.

Shenstone and D.M.C. Chase

Trophy Trial, S. Staffs.

Taunton M.C. Trial.

W. Hants and Dorset C.C. Christ-

mas Cup Trial.

December 13. Sunbac Evening Trial,

Birmingham.

Arms, discoursed mightily on motor sport, the show models, tuning, and all the controversial subjects dear to enthusiasts. The party broke up in the very small hours, and a motley bunch of cars dispersed into the wind and rain of the November night.

\* \* \*

## CHILTERN HILLS TRIAL

## Annual Invitation Event

DRIVERS from the Harrow, Cemian, Berkhamsted, Hants and Berks, M.G., and North London Enthusiasts' Clubs will compete with Chiltern C.C. members for the Chiltern Hills Trial on 3rd December. Hon. Trials Secretary is C. P. M. Green, "Corriebey", The Avenue, Amersham, Bucks.

The Club's A.G.M. was held on 17th November, and events planned for 1951 include Standard Car Trial, Closed Trial, Touring Rally, Concours d'Elegance, and Closed Invitation Trial.

\* \* \*

## CHAMPAGNE RALLY

## East Anglian Event to Wine Country

DETAILS have been issued of the Rally to Annecy next July, organized by East Anglian M.C. Maximum number of entries will be

limited to twenty, and Secretary Roy Clarkson announces that the finish will coincide with the start of the D'Evian Rally. Members who would like to take part in the French event should make certain that they will be in possession of an International Competition licence.

Incidentally the annual dinner-dance takes place in the Red Lion Hotel, Colchester, this evening.

\* \* \*

## BOXING DAY TRIAL

## The Cecil Kimber Trophy

ON Tuesday, 26th December, the M.G. Car Club (S.W. Centre) will hold their annual Closed Invitation Trial for the Cecil Kimber Trophy, over a 40-45-mile course outside Bristol. Invited clubs are Bristol, Taunton, N.W. London, Sunbac, West Hants and Dorset, and Cheltenham.

The start (at 12 noon) and finish will be at the Mile 3 Roadhouse, Bishopsworth, Bristol, on the main road to Bridgwater. Entries to R. H. White-Smith, Bourne House, Winterbourne, Glos., not later than Wednesday, 20th December.

\* \* \*

## NORTH STAFFS AND SEVERN VALLEY

## Joint 1951 Race Meeting?

THE North Staffs and the Severn Valley Club held a joint meeting at the Hawkestone Park Hotel on the 14th November, and decided to co-operate in an effort to find a suitable airfield for Closed Invitation Race Meetings during the coming year. Good luck to the endeavour. The opportunity for a spot of dicing would undoubtedly be popular in that area.

\* \* \*

## WEDDING BELLS

AUTOSPORT understands that Miss Grace Leather, Secretary of H.R.G. Ltd., is getting married on the 9th of December. Enthusiasts for the make will join with many others in wishing her every happiness.

(More Club News on page 480.)



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RILEY Monaco, 9 h.p., 1932. New tyres, bodywork neat and clean, engine "spot on", but timing gears noisy. Taxed, £95.

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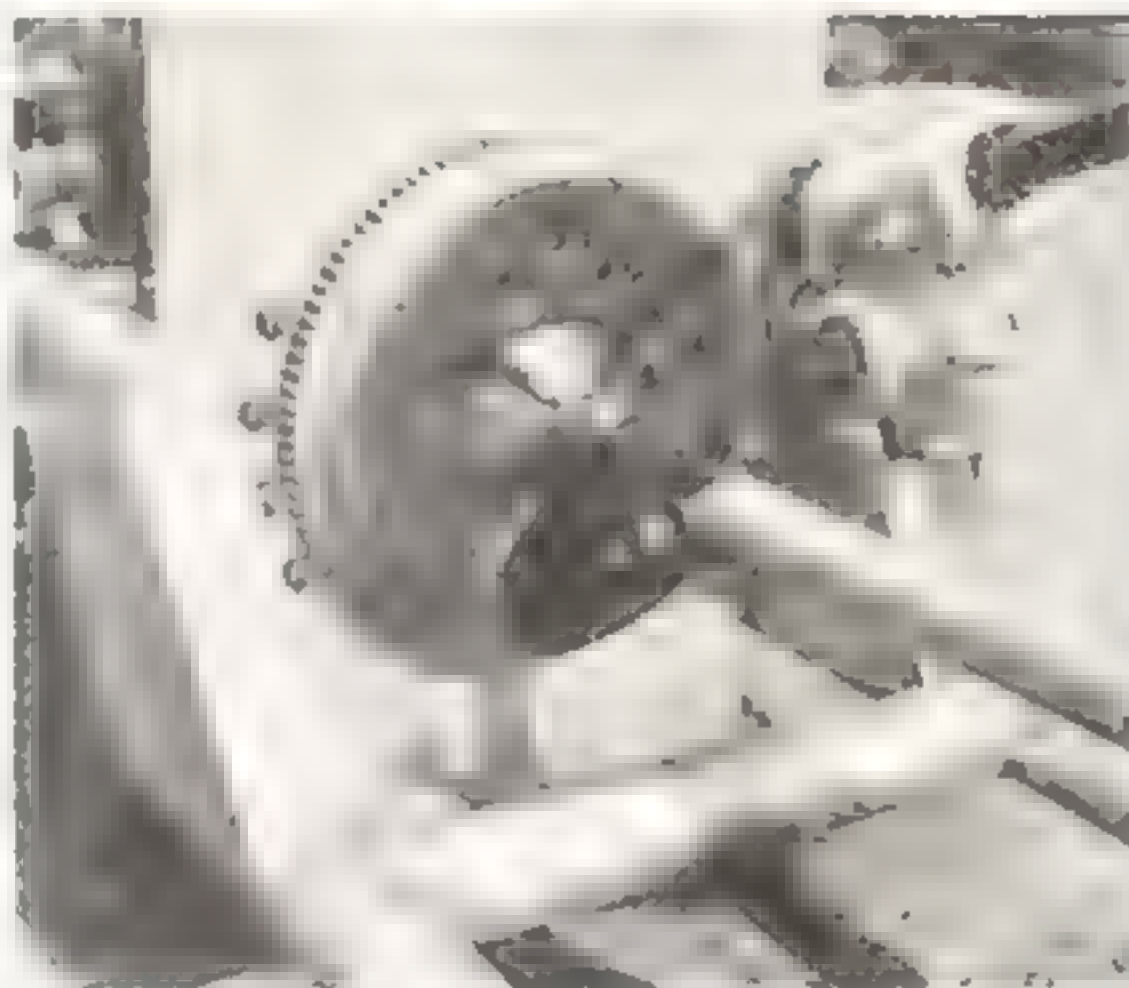
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## PRESS DAY

## FIRST POST, MONDAY

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**ROLLS ROYCE** 1920 Silver Ghost Cabriolet. Total mileage 16,000. Excellent oversize tyres. Offers over £50. Can be seen Chester. W/Cdr. J. Soerur, R.A.F. Turnhouse, Edinburgh.

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(continued overleaf)



## News from the Clubs—continued

**CUMBERLAND S.C.C. NIGHT EVENT****Robinson Best in Navigation Trial**

THIS club's Night Navigation Trial took place on the 19th November, starting from Carlisle, and finishing at the Queen's Head, Tirril. The winner was J. Robinson, who had got all his clues correct, and was only half a minute out in timing. Next best was Eric Peace with a two-minute time error, while A. Wilson came in third. The Hon. Secretary of the Cumberland Sporting Car Club is C. W. A. Slater, Scaleby Hall, Carlisle.

**MIDLANDS MOTORING ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB****Pre-Xmas Variety**

THAT energetic body, the M.M.E.C., plan a variety of events for the next few weeks. On 3rd December, a Minimum Mileage and Route Finding Competition will be held, starting from the Talbot, Hartlebury. Total distance will be under forty miles. On 6th December comes that inevitable but keenly awaited affair, the annual dinner.

**CHESHIRE CLUB REFORMED****Stockport M.C. over 100 Strong**

THAT very successful pre-war body, the Stockport Motor Club, was revived in September, 1950, and now has a membership of over 100.

Recent successful events include a Bonfire Run and Dinner on 5th November, and Social Runs on the 12th and 19th. A conducted Trial in Derbyshire is planned for the 3rd of December, starting at 11 a.m. from the Town Hall Square, Stockport, and finishing at the Prince's Hotel, Chinley.

Tuesday, 19th December, is the Club's date for a Dance at the Reform Club, Heaton Moor, Stockport. There will be a licensed bar, and tickets are 6s.

The Club becomes affiliated to the Cheshire Centre A.C.U. with effect from 1st January, 1951. Hon. Sec. is H. D. Cartwright, of 6 Chester-gate, Stockport.

**NORTH MIDLAND BIND THEIR WOUNDS****That Cancelled Speed Trial**

IN their current News Letter, the North Midland M.C. make harsh remarks about AUTOSPORT in general, and Russell Lowry in particular, in connection with the listing among coming attractions of a sprint meeting which should have been held at Chatsworth Park on 4th November. This meeting was cancelled, but no timely notice of the cancellation appeared in AUTOSPORT, so many enthusiasts were put to inconvenience. Wrath was directed at Lowry for not arranging due publicity for the cancellation, of which he was said to have been notified a month previously. Unfortunately, he "wasn't never". Hence exchange of good-natured rockets, and insistence by Bert Hud-

son on public "amende honorable".

Regulations and entry forms are now available for this Club's Autumn Sporting Trial, which will take place on 10th December, over a course of forty miles, starting from the Peacock Inn, Owlbar, near Sheffield, at 11 a.m., and finishing at the Downshire Arms, Baslow. The Trial will cater for standard cars in a separate class from the specials. In order to qualify as standard "the body, chassis and engine dimensions must be as the maker's original specification for that particular car and model thereof, and that model must have been listed by a recognized manufacturer and been available for purchase by the public". The Trial comes under the "closed" classification, but intending entries can qualify by taking out a competition membership of the Club, which costs 5s. All details are available from J. H. Hudson, "The Rise", Blackbrook, Belper, Derbyshire.

**INTER-UNIVERSITY RALLY****Manchester U.M.C. Plans**

THIS Club intends to organize an Inter-University Rally, and Ian G. T. Duncan of 7 Devon Road, Sheffield, 4, would be glad to hear from any University folk who may have views on the subject. The M.U.M.C. was re-formed in 1949, and already has three annual events to its credit, in addition to lectures, film shows, etc. On 8th December there will be a rally for standard cars, and the winner will receive the Committee Cup.

**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS—continued****MISCELLANEOUS—continued**

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(Gil Tyrer, Managing Director)

1936 (Jan.) M.G. PB 9 h.p. 2-seater, finished Red, very good condition. £295.

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**LITHERLAND MOTORS (LIVERPOOL) LTD.**  
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**FIAT "500" Spares.** Five 400-25 x 15 in. Dunlop Tyres and Tubes. Used 100 miles only; set re-conditioned hydraulic brakes, complete with back-plates, drums, pipes, etc. Two 15-in. road wheels. Any reasonable offers to: Ken Smith, "Jolly Farmers", Enfield, Middle. Tel. Enfield 1917.

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 CITROEN Big Twelve Sports Saloon, 1934, sound runner, offered at a give away price. £85  
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 HILLMAN 10 h.p. foursome D/H Coupé, 1938, grey with blue leather, brand new hood, tip-top mechanical order, twin headlights, etc. £385  
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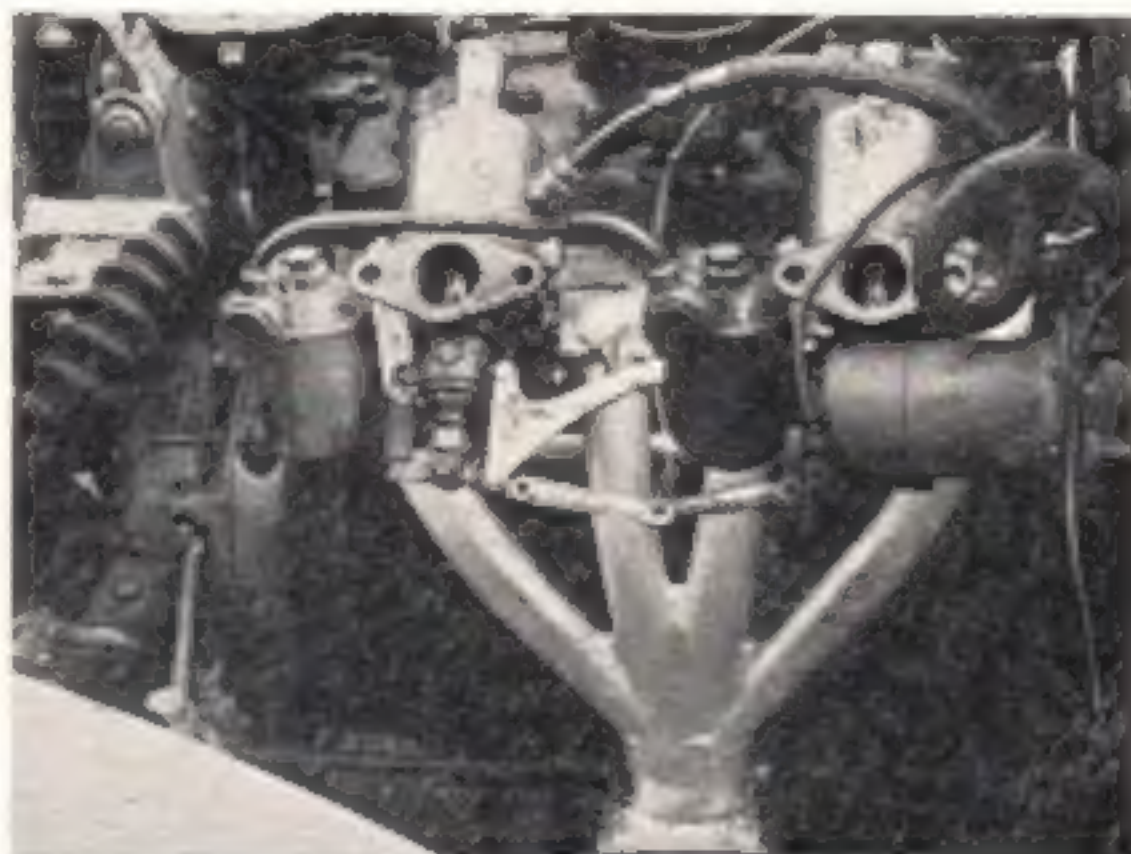


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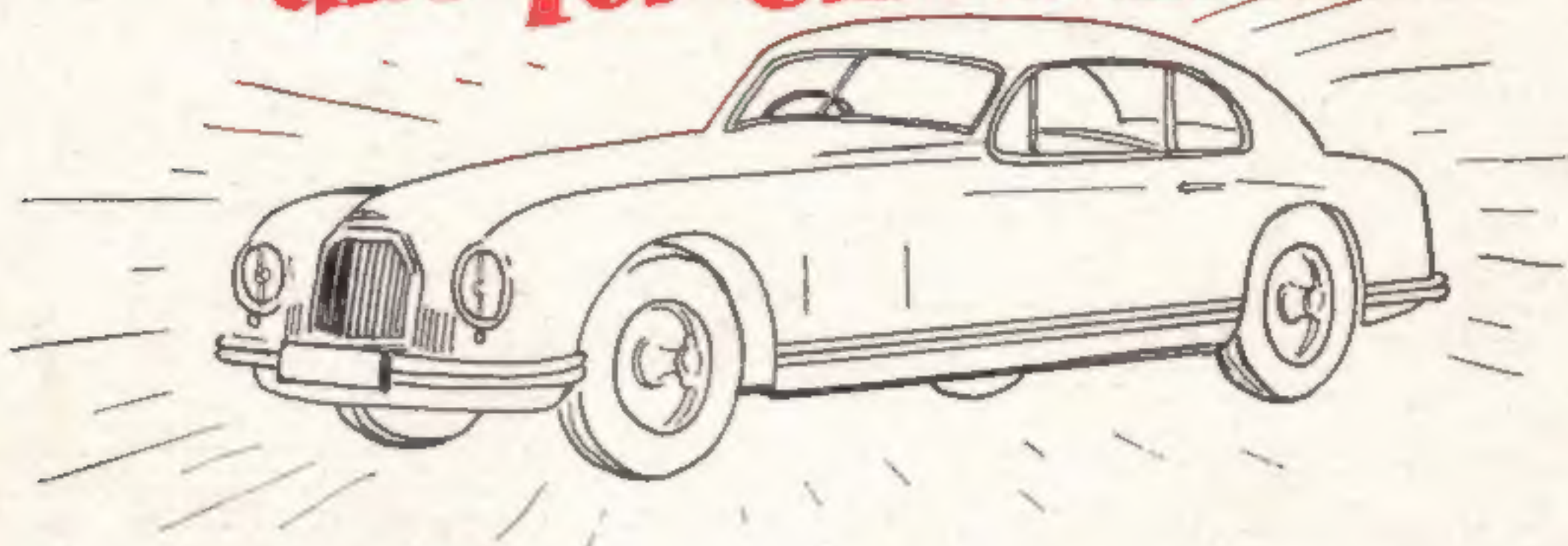
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